
Gay Male Videos Cum of Age

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Coming Home to "Black Pride and Solidarity"

Jewelle Gomez and Craig G. Harris on the National
Conference for Black Lesbians and Gay Men

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Coalition against racist, sexist, anti-gay attacks demands new investigation

Suicide Doubted in Black, Gay Man's Death

By Marcos Bisticas-Cocoves
with Faith Bellizzi

CONCORD, CA — A Black gay man was found hanging from a tree near the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station in this predominantly white city near San Francisco on November 2. The police maintain that the man, Timothy Lee, committed suicide. Groups from within the Black and gay communities, including the NAACP and an ad hoc coalition, maintain that the police investigation was inadequate and that Lee may have been murdered.

According to police, Lee fell asleep while enroute to Berkeley on the last BART train from San Francisco on the night of November 1 after attending a party thrown in his honor. He was awakened at the last stop in Concord and told to get off the train because BART was closing for the night and would be reopening at 6 a.m. Lee called friends in Berkeley at about midnight to get a ride home, and one friend's mother promised to call him back when she arranged a ride.

Lee's body was found hanging by a nylon strap from a fig tree in a vacant lot near the Concord BART station at 12:36 p.m. on November 2. Lee's wallet was found 30 feet from his body, and the cash and credit cards in it were untouched. In addition, a note to

Lee's brother and sister was found near the body, and read, "Tami and Tom. I love you. Sorry. Timmy."

The Contra Costa County coroner's office reports that Lee had died at about 6 a.m., that there was no evidence of trauma to Lee's body, and that he was intoxicated at the time of his death.

"I'm not about to go into all our reasoning," said Captain Robert Evans of the Concord police, "but all the facts in the case, and all the evidence at the scene, indicate that it [Lee's death] was a suicide." Evans continued, "We have nothing to hide," stating that an FBI investigation into Lee's death supports the police department's findings. However, John Holford, a spokesperson for the FBI, refused to corroborate Evans' claims, and stated only that an investigation had been conducted, that no arrests had been made, and no criminal charges had been brought against anyone.

The Coalition Against Racist, Sexist, and Antigay Attacks, an ad hoc committee formed in the wake of Lee's death, believes there are numerous unanswered questions in the case. First, the handwriting in the note found near Lee's body was nearly illegible, the names of his brother and sister — Tammy

and Thomas — were misspelled, and the writing was unlike Lee's. Although the state department of justice in Sacramento has determined that the handwriting is Lee's, Carmen Fortez, a member of the Coalition, argues that the note could have been written by someone else, or could have been written under duress.

Second, Tammy Lee, Timothy's sister, and other relatives who identified the body question the marks on Lee's body which the coroner's report states are ant bites, arguing they looked more like cigarette burns or cuts resulting from a struggle.

Third, given the coroner's report that Lee died at 6 a.m., it is unclear why Lee would have waited until the trains started running to kill himself after having called for a ride at midnight.

Fourth, according to Oliver Jones, a lawyer for the NAACP, screams had been heard in the vicinity of the Concord BART station the morning of Lee's death. Further, the police have not questioned the people who had heard those screams.

Fortez said that Lee's death resulted from a racist and anti-gay attack. He pointed out that the very night Lee died, two Black men were assaulted while talking

with two white women outside a bar in Concord by two white men wearing robes characteristic of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). Both Black men were stabbed, and one was hospitalized for the evening. The two white youths denied any affiliation with the KKK and said that the robes were handmade for

a Halloween costume party, even though it was two days after Halloween. Attorney Jones argued that although there may be no direct connection between the incidents, a possible connection warrants deeper investigation than the police have given the case thus

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MDC negligence, harassment cited

Man Murdered in Gay Cruising Area

By Kim Westheimer

MEDFORD, MA — In what appears to be a gay-related murder, a man was beaten, robbed, and shot in a forest here known as a cruising area for gay men. The shooting of Russell Cross, 44, is believed to have occurred Saturday, December 28, on Half Mile Road, which runs through the Middlesex Fells Reservation.

Cross, a resident of Dorchester, was last seen Saturday evening, when he left work to pick up his roommate at Logan Airport.

Preliminary reports by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) Police indicate that Cross was shot with a high-caliber gun or shotgun. He also suffered severe head-wounds, possibly from a rock or cinderblock, causing his teeth to be broken. His wallet and jewelry were stolen.

A detective assigned to the case, David Atkinson, told GCN that police currently suspect robbery as the motive in the case. However, Joe Antonelli, co-founder of the North Shore Gay and Lesbian Alliance, told GCN, "The guy was found nude [from the waist down]. Probably he was gay, set upon and baited. I think

that the man was set up by the type of person who said, 'It's a fag, who cares?'"

Antonelli, who claims that the MDC police often use undercover officers to entrap and harass gay men, believes that the police are at least in part to blame for assaults on gay men that occur in areas like the reservation. Antonelli said gay men go into the woods because they are harassed by police when they remain in cars. "If there was an across-the-board law [enforced], regardless of sexual preference, that would be one thing, but if they [MDC police] are baiting and only looking for the gay cars, then I just don't buy it," he said.

Atkinson denied that gay men are harassed in the park, claiming that there may have been arrests "way back," but none in the recent past. He said that he had no knowledge of plainclothes officers baiting gay men.

To help prevent future assaults on people in the forest, Antonelli wants the MDC to distribute flyers in the area with warnings that a murder has occurred and that the woods may be dangerous.

Father charged with negligence

Ruling on Guardian Set in Disabled Lesbian Case

By Kim Westheimer

MINNEAPOLIS, MN — Karen Thompson has charged Donald Kowalski with negligence in his court-appointed role as legal guardian for her lover and his daughter, Sharon Kowalski. The charges, brought before a Minnesota District Court judge December 20, include contempt of court, and stem from Donald Kowalski's refusal to grant Thompson visitation rights to Sharon Kowalski, who was severely injured in a car accident two years ago.

A key piece of evidence at the December 20 hearing was a ruling by the Minnesota Office of Health Facilities Complaints that Sharon Kowalski's rights as a "patient" have been violated. The September 1985 ruling stated that Leisure Hills Nursing Home, where Sharon Kowalski currently lives, violated the state's "Patient's Bill of Rights" by denying Kowalski visits from Thompson. Donald Kowalski, who was appointed his daughter's guardian in July of this year, has successfully barred Thompson from seeing Sharon Kowalski in the nursing home. (See GCN, Vol. 13, No. 15.)

"Even if the court order [instating Donald Kowalski as guardian] was fair and just," said Thompson, "he [Donald] must take the best interest of the ward into account. Sharon clearly stated that she wants to see me. The investigators from the Office of Health Facilities Complaints believe she does understand and wants to see me. They established

grounds for us to charge Donald Kowalski [with contempt of court]."

Sharon Kowalski's court-appointed lawyer has joined Thompson in bringing charges of contempt of court. In addition, both Thompson and Kowalski's lawyer have asked that Thompson or a neutral third party be instated as Sharon Kowalski's guardian, and that Donald Kowalski's attorney, Jack Fena, be removed from the case due to conflict of interest.

Fena is Donald Kowalski's personal lawyer, as well as the lawyer hired by Kowalski to represent his daughter in a personal injury suit. This suit has brought charges against the bar that served alcohol to the person who hit Sharon Kowalski in the automobile accident.

"How can he [Fena] do both?" asked Julie Andrzejewski, a member of the Committee on the Right to Recovery and Relationships, a group fighting for Thompson's and Sharon Kowalski's right to see each other. "Sharon is opposed to her guardian in litigation. The worse Sharon is made to look in terms of her injury the more money is available in personal injury suit and the more the guardian has control. According to the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union attorneys, it's a classic case of conflict of interest." Andrzejewski is certain that if Thompson were able to visit Sharon Kowalski, the latter would regain communication skills damaged by the accident. Such an improvement would de-

crease the amount of money that Fena would receive for his services. According to Andrzejewski, Fena will collect 40 percent of the total collected in the suit.

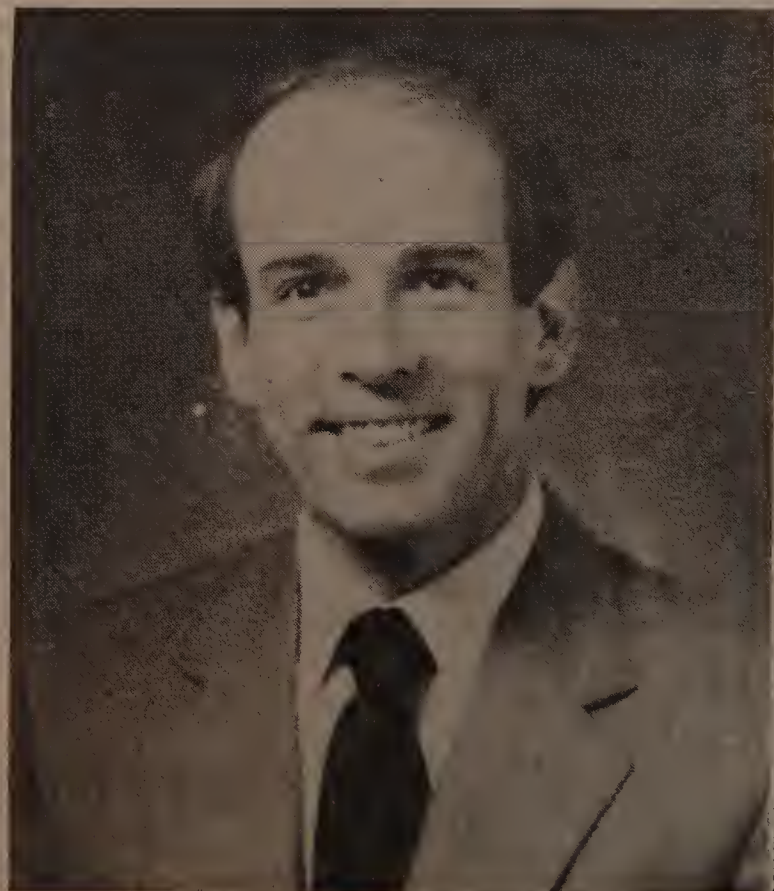
The Minnesota District Court judge is expected to reach a decision within a week on whether Donald Kowalski is in contempt of court. According to Thompson, the judge may also rule on who Sharon Kowalski's guardian should be and whether Fena should be taken off the case with no remuneration due to conflict of interest.

On January 22, the Minnesota Court of Appeals is scheduled to rule on the original district court order of July 23 that appointed Donald Kowalski guardian for Sharon Kowalski.

Thompson said she is confident that courts will "uphold the law" and rule in her favor. "We'll win this — I'm more and more convinced. It's a matter of if it is in time for Sharon. We're looking at two to three years since the accident. The longer the time in which she doesn't learn [skills impaired as a result of the accident], the greater the chance that she may never learn."

Tax-deductible donations to help offset legal costs for Thompson and Sharon Kowalski may be sent to Minnesota Gay and Lesbian Legal Assistance or to the Minnesota Society for Personal Liberties, c/o Suzanne Born, 3436 Holmes Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55408.

— filed from Boston



Russell Cross, the man murdered in the Middlesex Fells Reservation in Medford. For what it's worth, state police investigating the case ask that anyone who saw Cross there, or who might have information about people being harassed at the reservation, call Gary Walsh, (617) 494-4055. Callers may remain anonymous.

GCN file photo

News Notes

quotes of the week

"...Outside [of prison] gay groups refuse to be concerned with the lot of gay prisoners, even though they must know that the cops, judges, prison authorities, etc. etc. do all they can to get, and make time hard for, gays. I think people feel, 'You made your bed, now lie in it.' But no one, gay or not, has made their own bed without help from society. Friendship and awareness of what's going on are the keys to getting gays (and others) out of the vicious circle of prisons and reputations as 'cons' and no jobs and back to prison."

— from a letter to GCN's Prisoner Project, from H. Carrell Hay, 263672, Box 38 Goree, Huntsville, TX 77344

* * *

"I happen to believe that being homosexual is submission to circumstances rather than anything genetic or innate in the human being.... I consider it a problem, maybe they don't consider it a problem, but AIDS is manifesting that there is a problem somewhere in this kind of social behavior. Now I don't know what a politician would do, but I think if AIDS is a communicable disease it has to be quarantined until we can correct it."

— Minister Louis Farrakhan in an interview with The National Alliance

diplomatic dutch queers first to win "married" benefits

AMSTERDAM — Lesbian and gay couples in the diplomatic services here will be eligible for the same benefits as married heterosexual couples, beginning January 1, 1986. The new regulation will allow lesbians and gay men to receive the 40 percent salary supplement for a lover, currently available only for married couples, according to the New York *Native*.

The Netherlands is the first country in the world to introduce this type of regulation.

tdd for new york gay switchboard

NEW YORK — The Gay Switchboard here is now equipped to receive calls from deaf lesbians and gay men, due to their purchase of a telecommunications device (TDD). Deaf people can dial the switchboard number (212-777-1800) for information on referrals, according to the New York *Native*.

Deaf people calling the switchboard need to hit the spacebar on their TDD in order to let switchboard volunteers know that they are on the line. The switchboard is open every day from noon until midnight.

women smash misogynist sculptures

LEEDS, England — Two women have been acquitted on charges of having caused criminal damage to sculptures of chained and mutilated women, and three women received conditional discharges from Leeds Crown Court.

According to *Peace News*, of London, the women had broken into a gallery at Leeds Polytechnic Institute in November, 1984, smashing sculptures of a mutilated women's body in a refrigerator, two Black women in chains, and a naked woman lying on her back with her legs in the air, her breasts and genitals slashed. The three women who received conditional discharges and admitted to destroying the sculptures described their actions as being unplanned, angry responses to a students' exhibition of sculptures at the Institute.

Leeds Polytechnic had filed for 2000 pounds in damages, but did not receive any award.

A group of women is currently attempting to pressure local police to press charges against the Institute for displaying the sculptures.

final sales for freedom center

BOSTON — The Freedom Center store, located in the basement of 355 Boylston Street, will be closing its doors with a "going out of business" sale. Begun in opposition to the Vietnam war, and run by volunteers from the Social Action Committee of the Arlington Street Church, the store contributes its profits to more than 40 organizations, including three shelters for battered women and children, anti-nuclear groups, Planned Parenthood, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and organizations working for gay and lesbian rights, civil liberties, and women's rights.

The store is closing because the building in which it is housed has been sold. The price of merchandise such as jewelry, bumper stickers, buttons, and pottery is drastically reduced. Store hours are Monday through Saturday, 12:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m., until January 31. For more information call (617) 437-1854.

it's not nice to make fun of 'god'

WEST GERMANY — An ancient blasphemy law is being resurrected here to prosecute four people who distributed posters that publicized an anti-clerical week. The poster depicts a priest with a puppet-shaped "god."

According to *Peace News*, of London, the prosecution has focused on two aspects of the poster. One is the presence of "Reichskonkordat," the historic agreement between the Vatican and Hitler, in the priest's pocket. The other is the portrayal of "god" as an "aged wizard-like hippie hand puppet." Such a depiction takes the poster out of the realm of "tough, sarcastic but permitted criticism" to an "intentionally degrading devaluation of the concept of god," according to the prosecution.

Use of the blasphemy law is being protested as a suppression of free speech. The prosecution is citing protests on these grounds as "evidence" that the posters are detrimental to public law and order.



"a kiss is still a kiss?"

THOMASTON, ME — Visitation rights have been revoked for a gay man who kissed his lover while visiting him at Maine State Prison. According to the Boston *Globe*, Peder Baughman, 29, hugged prisoner Daniel Nulty, 27, and kissed him on the cheek. Baughman is appealing the decision through the Maine Department of Corrections.



a women-only police station for sao paulo

SAO PAULO, Brazil — A women-only police station has been created here to encourage women to report crimes such as rape and beatings, with more than two hundred women a day now reporting such crimes.

According to *off our backs*, Rosmary Correa, chief inspector of the station, said she considers the new station a success: "It is hard for a woman to tell a policeman, who is not always sympathetic [to] all of the intimate details of the sexual or physical abuse she has suffered. Here a woman feels freer to go into these details which are often of vital importance to bring the aggressor to trial."

Other Brazilian states have also announced plans to open women-only police stations.

new aids study further discounts saliva as route of transmission

BOSTON — A report released by Dr. David Ho, of Massachusetts General Hospital, should help allay fears that AIDS may be contracted by saliva. Ho's study of 71 gay men, reported in the New York *Times*, found the HTLV-III virus present in only one man's saliva. In that case, the level of the virus was "ten thousand fold lower" than it was in the man's blood.

A previous study, published last October in the journal *Science*, found the HTLV-III virus in the saliva of eight out of 18 gay men.

Jerome Groopman, of Boston's New England Deaconess Hospital, is not clear as to why the two studies had such different results. Regardless of those differences, Groopman told the *Times* the fact remains that "saliva has not been an avenue of disease transmission."

AIDS activists and researchers have argued that saliva is an unlikely vehicle of transmission as no cases of AIDS have been attributed to it. If saliva were a vehicle of transmission, friends and family of people with AIDS who do not fall into high-risk groups would be contracting the disease.

stop rape, now

NEW YORK — The National Organization for Women (NOW) Media Reform Task Force has successfully blocked the marketing of "Rape," a proposed new perfume. According to *off our backs*, a company here had filed papers to register "Rape" as the name of a perfume already test-marketed in a few locations.

The company's vice president admitted that the papers were withdrawn due to public pressure.

Timothy Lee

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far. While police maintain that there is no relation between the two incidents, Fortez termed the presence of the robed youths "too coincidental."

Asked if he saw any kind of pattern of violence against Black and gay people in the area, Fortez indicated that he did and said that there had been a cross-burning in Concord about two years ago on the lawn of a Black family's home.

"When a Black gay man is found hanging in a white suburb, it is a sign to Blacks and gays to 'watch out' and 'stay in your place.'"

The Coalition consists of a broad array of groups, including the Asian Lesbian and Gay Association, Revolutionary Workers League, Black Community Task Force, Revolting Lesbians, National Council of Black Lawyers, Jewish Women for a

Secular Middle East, Women's Press, Uhuru House, Freedom Socialist Party, Radical Women, Abortion Clinic Defense Committee, and San Francisco State University's La Raza Unida and Lesbian-Gay Alliance. The group conducted two demonstrations outside the Concord BART station, one on November 15 with approximately 50 people, and one on December 13 with between 60 and

75 people. Among the demands of the groups are an end to attacks against people of color and gay men and lesbians, and a thorough, independent investigation into Lee's death.

That investigation may not be forthcoming. According to Evans, the police are satisfied with the explanation they have found. Jones told *GCN*, "There's not a lot you can do but ask for a fair and com-

prehensive investigation. That doesn't mean it will happen." When asked why the Concord police had not investigated the death more thoroughly, Jones said that "the police don't want to find a nexus of Klan activity in Contra Costa County. They don't want to cultivate an image of white supremacist activity."

— filed from Boston

this week's news notes compiled by kim westheimer

'New' Black Lesbian, Gay Movement Heralded

'It Was All About Home'

By Jewelle Gomez

ST. LOUIS — "I haven't seen this many Black folks just hanging out together, having a good time since I left Concord Baptist Church." That sentiment of surprise opened the annual conference of the National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays, held in St. Louis, November 29 through December 1. The excitement was sustained from the first keynote address by Henry Chinn, assistant director of Cooperative Legal Education at Northeastern University in Boston, to the flurry of phone-number exchanging in the Sheraton lobby as people dashed to their homeward-bound flights.

Two hundred Afro-American lesbians and gay men met for three days to discuss issues of major importance to the community and to devise strategies to address the myriad of oppressions we face. As is true with most conferences, many panels competed with each other for our attention. Clusters of people stood Saturday morning in the lobby trying to decide between attending the panel on Spirituality as a Liberating Force, the one on AIDS in the Black Community, or that on Using Electoral Politics.

NCBLG, originally the National Coalition of Black Gays, was cofounded by A. Billy Jones in Washington, D.C. and now has Gilberto Gerald as its executive director. There are chapters in Washington, Baltimore, the Bay Area, and Minnesota, with an individual membership that spans the east and west coasts. People from

editorial collective of *Conditions* magazine in Brooklyn. Clarke discussed the reticence of Black women and men to identify themselves as writers and the way that has slowed our entry into the writing world. She also pointed out the value of poetry readings as a fundraising tool and an organizing method. The art of self-publishing follows, she said, in a long and honorable American literary tradition; the extraordinary sales of her first book, *Narratives*, under her own imprint and then that of Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press proved that it can also be good business.

Joe Beam, of Philadelphia, discussed his early writing — doing reviews of "women's music" for alternative presses. He developed the skills and credentials to edit an anthology of writing by Black gay men, *In the Life*, which will be published by Alyson Press, Boston, in 1986. Beam emphasized the importance of there being a variety of outlets in which Black lesbians and gay men can express themselves.

Assoto Saint, of New York City, discussed the demise of *Blackheart*, a Black men's magazine of poetry and fiction, and asked very pointed questions of the other panelists about the collective effort: how to sustain it, how decisions are made, and how to avoid burnout without losing control of the publication. Other panelists emphasized these were core problems they all faced.

Barbara Smith, of Albany, N.Y., and Betty Powell, of Brooklyn, discussed the genesis of Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press. They noted that only four major publishers in the U.S. are not owned by multi-national corporations and explore the impact such ownership has on the kinds of books that are published. The focus on profit almost immediately disallows publication of literature by Black gays, since we are not perceived as offering a significant market. The panel moderator, Colin Robinson, helped the panel and participants to focus on the need for collective support systems and resource sharing. Out of the session came the proposal for a Black writers' bank which would enroll as many Black, gay writers as possible so that our names could be used in referral. Such a "bank" would be a particularly important resource in expanding the coverage of Black events in the general gay community. Often white publications know only a few Black writers and rely on them without reaching out to others.

In the middle of this panel's discussion session (which included questions on everything from how to get around white editors who refuse to capitalize the word 'Black' to appropriate paper weight for printing), I dashed out to introduce two films being shown. *Hairpiece: A Film for Nappy-Headed People* is a short and charming animation directed by Ayoka Chenzira. It elicited hearty laughter and groans of recognition of the days when the pursuit of straight hair was an Afro-American obsession. *Before Stonewall*, directed by Greta Schiller, drew important parallels for the audience between the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and the gay activism that we are experiencing now. In the discussion following the film, the audience expressed disappointment in the small number of people of color who were interviewed (no Asians, no Latinas/os), yet everyone was affected by the film's ability to catch the pain and exhilaration which echoed from decade to decade, from movement to movement.

On Saturday night, the second keynote address was given by Gwendolyn Rogers, of New York City, who is on the board of NCBLG, a member of Salsa Soul Sisters, and of Sisters in Support of South Africa. She began with a quote from a Yoruba proverb: "If we stand tall it is because we stand on the shoulders of our many ancestors." Her call for a New Movement of Black and gay activism was made, she said, in full awareness of the continuing oppression that affects us. She pointed to the terrorist activities perpetrated against Black people: the murder of Eleanor Bumpers by the New York City police, the bombing of the Black community in Philadelphia, as well as the persistent attacks against gays, including raids on Black gay bars like Blues in New York City and the series of homophobic articles in the *Amsterdam News*, New York City's Black newspaper. She encouraged people not to shy away from approaching the Black community and to be prepared to

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"As Proud of our Gayness as we are of our Blackness" — The National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays (nee, NCBG) banner at the 20th Anniversary March on Washington, August 27, 1983.

The NCBLG Family Gathers

By Craig G. Harris

"...And many other soldiers of rank and file gathered, members of the family, the youth and elders of the tribe.

This is how we bond in fellowship — in a circle of light and missions.

The family gathered, armed and extremely dangerous.

— Essex Hemphill

from *BLACKHEART: family gathering*

ST. LOUIS — Thanksgiving weekend. All around the country families gather for the annual celebration of the rip-off of the Native American people. But one family used this holiday weekend to gather under another theme, "Black Pride and Solidarity: The New Movement of Black Lesbians and Gays." The family was the National Coalition of Black Gays (NCBG), and the site of the reunion was the Sheraton-St. Louis.

The occasion was the NCBG General Convention/Annual Conference, held November 29-December 1, and representatives from many branches of the family were present. From local residents, to chapter, affiliate, and individual members, to representatives from the Black Lesbian & Gay Centre project of London, the family gathered.

NCBG's board members and convention delegates started the business of the weekend by passing a motion to change the family name to the National Coalition of Black Lesbians and Gays, and by welcoming Philadelphia writer/activist Joe Beam to the board of directors. There was also discus-

Muslims and the Black Panthers were both groups that at first were looked upon suspiciously until they involved themselves in a serious way with Black people's concerns."

Addressing the issue of fear and ignorance of AIDS in our communities, Chinn stated, "While the media would have the public believe that mostly gay men are dying of AIDS, it is the poor and Blacks who are dying disproportionately at higher rates than their percentage in the population. The Black populace is not being educated about the illness, at least not in Boston where I reside. I can only imagine that the situation is no different elsewhere."

These themes were echoed the following evening when Gwendolyn Rogers, NCBLG board member and chair of NCBLG's political action and education committee, delivered her keynote address, assessing the state of the Black movement and the lesbian and gay movement. Rogers began by saying that she had not prepared a formal speech. She wanted to feel her audience, knowing that they would steer the direction of her address. In a very powerful extemporaneous talk, Rogers asserted that while the Black movement is in another period of dormancy, and national gay organizers are being forced to think quickly of new ways to raise funds or fold, NCBLG is in a stable financial position and is continuing to wage political battles on several fronts.

Rogers spoke of the need for an autonomous Black gay and lesbian move-

At home we need to counter the attacks of the Moral Majority, the irresponsibility of the Black press, and the structural racism of the gay movement.

sion of ratifying the organization's by-laws to better serve the needs of its rapidly growing membership. That discussion, however, was tabled, and it was resolved that a more intensive review of the by-laws over a period of several months would be necessary to launch the new movement of Black lesbians and gay men.

Following the General Convention, the family was welcomed by NCBLG Executive Director Gilberto Gerald and the board Co-Chairs Louis Hughes and Michelle Parker-son, at Friday afternoon's General Conference session.

On Friday evening Henry Craig Chinn, Jr., assistant director of cooperative legal education at Northeastern University School of Law and president of Boston's Black Men's Association, delivered the first of two keynote addresses. Quoting Baldwin, Fanon, and Aimée Cesaire, Chinn spoke of the impact of colonization on the Black lesbian and gay community. He stressed the importance of coalition-building within the Black community at large, stating, "We, as Black gay and lesbian people, must make a broader and more publicized involvement in our communities on every level in order to change the way that we are perceived." He used the Black Power Movement as a reference, adding, "Recall how the Black

ment, stressing that "we need to get our house in order." Relating her experience as a delegate to the U.N.-sponsored international women's conference in Nairobi in July of this year, Rogers warned her audience of their responsibility to speak out on behalf of our brothers and sisters throughout the diaspora — particularly those in South Africa. At home, we need to counter the attacks of the Moral Majority, the irresponsibility of the Black press, and the structural racism of the gay movement. Rogers' keynote was a pep talk which she would not end until her audience indicated by numerous standing ovations that they were psyched.

The five workshop sessions of the weekend carried such titles as: "Bringing the Black Family Home," "Building an Autonomous Black Gay Press," "Spirituality as a Liberating Force," "Crisis: Violence Against Lesbians, Gays, and Heterosexual Women," "Alternative Strategies for Organizational Development in the Black Community/Coalition Building," and "Our International Mandates."

The most well-attended of the workshops included: "AIDS in the Black Community," in which panelists Eddie

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Gwendolyn Rogers in Nairobi

everywhere seemed to be milling around the hotel lobby on Saturday.

* * *

On Saturday afternoon, a man about 45 years old stood outside the room where part two of the workshop on AIDS in the Black Community was resuming. "I can't go back in there, it's too sad," he said. A young woman took his hand and said, "That was part one. Now it's time to get mad. Come on." They went back in while I continued a debate with some sisters on whether to attend that workshop or one on Bringing the Black Family Home or the Report-Back from Nairobi. It was all about home.

Saturday afternoon included sessions on international solidarity, violence against gays and women, and building positive gay images. This last panel included Dr. Vickie Mays, of the University of Calif., Los Angeles, who has been assembling written interviews for her historic study on Black lesbian couples. She still has a shortage of questionnaire responses from women on the east coast. Those interested should get information from NCBLG, 930 F St. NW, No. 514, Washington, DC 20004.

Among many exceptional workshops was one on Building an Autonomous Black Gay Press. The panelists were a microcosm of the creative and business impulses in our community, offering a model of intellectual examination and practical information. This workshop was particularly important in light of the current effort to expand distribution of the NCBLG publication, *Habari-Daftari*. Outgoing editor from Chicago, Chris Cothran, described his struggle to assemble the news and other information that is most often missing from both straight and gay publications. Also on the panel was Essex Hemphill of D.C., who discussed the nuts and bolts of establishing Be Bop Press and publishing his own book of poems, *Earth Life*. As a co-founder of *Nethula*, a journal of Black arts, Hemphill learned the practical elements of publishing that helped him establish Be Bop.

Another panelist with self-publishing and editorial experience was Cheryl Clarke, of New Jersey, a poet and member of the

Community Voices

GCN welcomes letters to the editor. If possible, they should be TYPED and DOUBLESPACED, and where possible limited to five typed pages. They should be sent to: Community Voices, GCN, 167 Tremont St. #5, Boston, MA 02111.

coors' lies

Dear *GCN*:

The Boycott Coors Taskforce would like to bring some facts to light regarding Coors' record of being anti-gay and anti-union. The recent controversy over whether or not gay publications should accept advertising from Coors' distributor, United Liquors, requires a response. United Liquors' spokesperson Ray Tye stated at a gay community networking breakfast on Dec. 11 that "Coors in not anti-union or anti-gay." Furthermore, Coors' spokesperson John Meadows was quoted in the 12/21/85 *GCN* as stating that Coors' employees were never asked about their sexual preferences. These are outright lies, and it is crucial that our community not be misled about Coors' policies.

At least four Coors employees have gone to the trouble to make out affidavits swearing that they were asked many questions about their sexuality and their sexual preference. Affidavits on record and signed by Guy Decker, Dick Anderson, Benito Mares, and Oliver Desmarais expose the following questions that were asked of Coors employees:

"Have you ever been involved with homosexuals?"

"What are your sexual preferences?"

"How often have you had sex?"

"What kind of sex?"

In addition, Irene Temple, a Coors employee, testified this way to the Subcommittee on Labor Relations of the House Committee on Commerce and Labor:

"They asked very personal questions: are you married, divorced, or do you have any boyfriends? How many? Do you ever have sex? How often?... If I didn't answer the questions, I would not get the job. They made that clear. I hesitated when they got to my personal life, but I had no choice."

Last year, in a celebrated court case, reported in all the gay press for all to see, Coors unsuccessfully sued gay activist Howard Wallace for organizing the boycott on the West Coast. Coors sought the confidential mailing list of the Coors boycott group. Judge Spencer Williams of the California District Court threw the case out and ruled that the gay group was constitutionally protected from divulging its membership list, because it sought to oppose Coors' lie detector tests for employees.

But the danger which Coors represents to the gay community was well demonstrated as recently as Nov. 20 in Boston when quarantining AIDS victims at the old leper colony in Boston Harbor was urged at a forum sponsored by Morality in Media. In the past five years, the Coors Foundation has donated at least \$20,000 to Morality in Media and Joe Coors is currently on its national planning board. On just this matter of quarantine, Coors has publicly stated that he is proud of donating money to the Moral Majority, whose leader, Jerry Falwell, has also recently called for quarantining AIDS victims.

The Coors Boycott Coalition urges everyone in our community to become better educated about Coors and not to contribute to our own oppression by purchasing Coors beer. It should not be too much for our community to come together on this issue for which there exists ample documentation of Coors' anti-gay and anti-union activity, not to mention the racist, ablist, and anti-semitic policies being pushed by Coors' organization like the Heritage Foundation, the Committee for a Free Congress, the Moral Majority and all the rest.

Coors' organizations create the policies that seek to deprive us of our rights and intimidate us, and Coors' money pays for the furtherance of these policies. It is our solidarity which will drive Coors and his policies of quarantine and prejudice out of Massachusetts, New England, and the U.S.

As far as being anti-union goes, Joe Coors is on the national Board of Americans Against Union Control of Government and has busted the following unions: Asbestos Workers Local 28, Boilermakers Local 101, Brewery Workers Local 366, Bricklayers Local 1, Carpenters District Council, Cement Masons Local 577, Electricians Local 68, Glaziers Local 930, Iron Workers Local 24, Lathers Local 68, Linoleum Layers Local 419, Millwrights Local 2834, Painters Local 79, Pipefitters Local 208, Plumbers Local 3, Roofers Local 41, Sheetmetal Local 9, and Tile, Marble, and Helpers Local 25.

Gerry Scoppettuolo
Boycott Coors Task Force
Gay and Lesbian Activists (GALA)
OPEIU/AFL-CIO Organizing Staff
Northampton, MA

and besides, it tastes bad

Dear *GCN*:

One issue that has been missed in the furor over Coors (and your December 21st piece on it were excellent) is that the beer, which "took off" during the Nixon years when premature yuppies in the White House flew crates of it to the East, is a weak excuse for a decent brew.

It is a risky business for a recovering alcoholic to argue the taste of beer, but I did love beer and was always amazed that American consumers settled for such tepid stuff as we get — of which Coors is a prime example. Even if I agreed with Joseph Coors, and had not stopped drinking, I'd boycott Coors on grounds of taste. Can I suggest *GCN* consider a fair and honest taste test comparing Coors, Kirin, Ballantyne Ale (is my spelling right on that?), and any two standard U.S. brews plus one good regional, such as the one produced in New York State, and one or two good European imports? I'll bet the Japanese and European brews — and possibly the ale — prove more popular. Beer can be so good and Coors is so second rate, even if they had good politics it wouldn't be worth it.

David McReynolds
New York, NY

no one's perfect

Dear *GCN*:

Re: The Coors boycott, if you knew the character and policies of the heads of most corporations, you wouldn't want to buy their products either. For example, if you knew the anti-environmental practices of any oil company, you wouldn't be able to fuel your car.

Doesn't the gay community have more important items on its agenda?

Peter N. Reed
Phoenix, AZ

a note for frank

Dear *GCN*:

This note is for all those who knew and wrote Mr. Frank Ernest Randall (Frank Randall) in the prison system in Iowa. We are grieved to learn that Frank has died at the University of Iowa hospitals after drinking cleaning solution to end his life.

I am Frank's cousin and we were close. Frank has led a life of loneliness. He never could find the love he needed. By becoming gay he found not just some love but a lot of love from our gay brothers and sisters. I would like to thank all the gay people who wrote to Frank. You helped some (and a lot). I'm sorry to say he held his feelings locked up inside his heart too long which resulted in his losing hope and killing himself. I now plead with you if you know anyone who's down [in prison], especially those who are gay, show them as much love as you can, especially those with AIDS. Make their days a little more hopeful.

Thank you,
William Lacey
Box A 206637
Oakdale, IA 52319

[Prisoner Project note: a poem by Frank was published in our last prisoner poetry center spread.]

the quest for comprehensive aids coverage

Dear *GCN*:

Why is our concept of the AIDS crisis like an elephant? Because we ourselves are like the proverbial blind pack: each has a hand on a part, but none has an understanding of the whole.

Our knowledge remains fragmentary because the mass media, both gay and straight, have failed to provide a coverage of AIDS that is grounded on vigorous investigative reporting, sharpened by exhaustive follow-up, and integrated into a comprehensive point of view. For example, for more than six months now a major San Francisco hospital has kept *unused* on its shelves an antiviral drug that many AIDS people desperately need but cannot obtain except by going to Mexico. Who is the media pressing hard-nosed questions about such bureaucratic bumbles? No one.

Partly as a result of the inadequacy of the media, people who have life-saving information cannot get it into the hands of those who need it most, medical researchers needlessly duplicate each other's studies, a swelling tide of homophobia sweeps along a public starved for reliable information, and an ill-informed government responds with halting, piecemeal, and uncoordinated politics.

In order to get a more comprehensive media understanding of AIDS, we the undersigned propose to create a unique new endeavor: The Whole-Picture Project. This will be a nonprofit institute that will underwrite the expenses and salary of a lesbian or gay reporter for one year. The reporter, a seasoned journalist yet to be determined, will travel around the country vigorously pursuing all significant AIDS leads, uncovering any suspicious dark corners, cross-examining medical experts, scrutinizing public office holders, and integrating the latest findings into a comprehensive overview. By so doing, the reporter will uncover new developments and integrate information in a way that no one in the mass media now has the means or motivation to do, thereby helping to enlighten people with AIDS, the government and the public at large.

The Whole-Picture Project foresees an initial budget of \$75,000 to pay for the salary, travelling expenses, secretarial support, and other costs of a top-notch lesbian or gay reporter. We seek donors, both large and small, across the nation who would be willing to underwrite such a project, serve on its board of directors, select the journalist in question, and review his or her work. We ourselves (all veteran gay activists) are only the facilitators of the project and will retire from its services once its board and contributors are established.

If you or anyone you know can help us create and maintain such a project, please get in touch with us at once at The Whole-Picture Project, 2215-R Market Street, #238, San Francisco, CA 94114 (telephone [415] 547-2200). We assure you both of complete confidentiality and of the seriousness and capability of the project. Remember, throwing money after AIDS research is not enough. We need to have access to the whole picture.

Sincerely,
The Whole-Picture Project
Hank Wilson, Ben Gardiner, Burt Gerrits,
Arthur Evans
San Francisco, CA

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GCN particularly encourages gay men and lesbians of color to apply.

GayCommunityNews

Cover design by Tom Huth

Gay Community News is produced by a collective dedicated to providing coverage of events and news in the interest of gay and lesbian liberation. The collective consists of a paid staff of eleven, a general membership of volunteers, and a board of directors elected by the membership. The paper is published weekly (except a week in December and a week in August) by the Bromfield Street Education Foundation, Inc., a non-profit corporation.

Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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Speaking Out

Prisoner With AIDS: Double Isolation

• By Ed Bubbenmayer, M7873, Box 200, Camp Hill, PA 17011
[This letter is from a prisoner with AIDS recently transferred from one of the state prisons to a prison hospital — and apparently about to be transferred back.]

Your letter came today. It's the only mail I have had in weeks. I started to feel as if I had dropped off the face of the earth. Most of my friends have dropped away because of the state of my health, as if I could pass it on through the mail. I have been gay all of my life and still don't understand gays. I don't even try anymore.

I hope you don't mind a personal letter from someone you don't know, but seeing how it is Christmas Eve and I'm feeling more lonely than usual I need to talk to someone. (I'm the only one awake as I don't sleep well these days, being afraid, oddly enough, of not waking up to live one more day in this hell hole.) I don't know how much longer I can keep up the front of being able to deal with having the Big (A) all by myself. I have always told myself from the very start of the outbreak that I would be able to deal with it, but I'm not doing as well as I thought I would. I'm sick of having people say "Don't get too close," or "I am not worried about getting it but I have a family to think of," or worse, "God has finally made you pay for your sick sinful ways." Not always said in just so many words, of course.

There are three other inmates here with me. (There were four but Ron died last week.) If it was not for Mark, Bobby, Steve and myself to look after each other, there would be no one to care for us at all.

But there is a sad part to all of this. I was told that some time after the new year Mark will be sent back to the prison in Dallas [PA], Steve will go back to Muncy and I will be sent to Rockview prison. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is afraid of a suit by the "corrections officers" here who fear for their own health. If we are sent away, they'll put us back in isolation (death row probably), even though I have only a year before my release date. Mark's dad is challenging this in the courts but has lost the first round. The judge said, "if they don't want to keep them in jail what makes you think people want them on the street. I don't have to release them before they've served their time." Rather fine attitude for a man of the law, don't you think?

I don't worry for myself as I can deal with the redneck ideas these guys have here, but Steve don't have any fight left in him. He weighs 96 lbs. and is covered with skin cancer. The boy can hardly feed himself and instead of placing him on the outside to be cared for, they want to put him back in a cell.

The other gays here don't have much to say to any of us. They stop by to see Bobby because he is from here, but they don't get too close and they don't speak to anyone but Bobby. They act as if the rest of us are not there. I would understand straights acting like that, but not another faggot? When one of them falls helpless to the Big (A), they will see just how bad it was for us.

I spoke with my sister. She said she had phoned to come visit for X-mas and the prison

people told her I was not allowed to have visitors. She was really p.o. about all of this and will be up after the first of the year. Someone will give her some answers or find themselves in court. She really gets out of hand when it comes to her baby brother.

As for pamphlets on AIDS, please send any and all info you have. I've already started a scrapbook with what appears in *GCN*. Thank you for running my ad for me. The last one you ran I had 6 people answer. Out of the 6 only 2 are still writing: a school teacher from Ohio and a lesbian from Phila. PA. Joyce has visited a lot over the last year and has been a real support to me in all of this. In fact, she has gone out of her way to help me any way she can. We will be living together if I ever get out. But I need to have more contact with the gay world. I have all the straight contact I can stand. I need to be able to tell gays what it is like to deal with the loneliness and the hurt of pain and how sorry you feel to have someone you like turn on you because you are sick; and then to watch others who have AIDS get sicker each day that passes and you are helpless to do anything about it but be by their side and hold their hand and let them know that you care even if no one else does; I'd like to tell all gays and lesbians to stand side by side to show the world of straights that we care for each other if no one else does. Gays have come a long way to let this push us back into the ice age. I will not give up the fight and I refuse to lay down and do nothing. I matter to me if to no one else. I am proud to call myself a gay male. What does it matter if you love male/female, male/male or female to female, just so long as you do. I know this will send me to my death but I feel I will die knowing I did what I could.

Well, I ran my pen long enough. Have yourself a happy and joyful holiday. I send my love to the staff of *GCN* for all they have done for gays. You have done a great job and some day I hope to be able to meet each and every one of you to thank you all personally.

"Speaking Out" is part of our continuing effort to provide a true forum of opinion for the community. We encourage you to send your ideas, feelings, and comments to us and we encourage you to respond to any ideas expressed in this space. Submissions to "Speaking Out" should be TYPED and DOUBLE SPACED, and, if possible, held to under 5 pages in length. The *GCN* staff collective reserves the right to limit length and number of signatures in "Speaking Out." The opinions expressed in "Speaking Out" do not necessarily reflect the views of the newspaper, the staff, or the advertisers. Write c/o Speaking Out, *GCN*, 167 Tremont St., 5th Fl., Boston, MA 02111.

Politics of AIDS in Prison

By Ed Mead, 251397, Box 777, Monroe, WA 98272

According to television news reports, there are two cases of possible AIDS in Washington state's prison system. Both of these were in remote medium security facilities. The official response to this development has not been recorded as of yet, although there will be many opportunities in the future for measuring their reply. As the disease continues to spread into the lower economic strata of the heterosexual working class, it will only be a matter of time before more and more victims of the disease find their way into the states' prison systems. This is a likelihood prisoners should start thinking about now, so as to avoid the blind overreaction that has taken place in some states when confronted with an AIDS case.

On August 8, 1985, for example, the warden of the Stillwater prison in Minnesota informed the population that a new admission to the institution had been diagnosed as having symptoms of a condition related to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, or pre-AIDS, which means that the person is carrying the AIDS virus. The panic resulting from the warden's announcement made it necessary to lock the prison down for 10 days.

The panic at Stillwater is a phenomenon that can be found to one degree or another in every facility where AIDS-infected prisoners are confined. In California guards were unwilling to accompany or apply physical restraints on an AIDS patient who was being transferred to another facility. In Arizona three guards were allowed transfers from the state prison at Florence following confirmation of that system's only known AIDS case.

In more enlightened areas the response has been just as intense, although considerably more rational. Prisoners at Saint-Gilles in Brussels reacted to the discovery of HTLV-III antibodies in fellow prisoners by refusing to go back to their cells after exercise period and 15 prisoners took to the roof in support of their demands. The protest sought mandatory blood screening to determine if prisoners have AIDS, and special treatment and care for prisoners that do. The policy of different jurisdiction varies on this issue. In Michigan's prison system it is policy for AIDS cases to stay in population unless they are physically ill, while the guards are demanding the isolation of these patients.

According to the September 3, 1985 issue of *Criminal Justice Newsletter*, "The New York Department of Correctional Services has reported 196 confirmed cases; 128 have died." New Jersey has 73 AIDS cases in its prison system, Florida has 26. Nevada something like 11. California 10. Texas 8, Oregon 2, at least one case in Michigan, Minnesota and Arizona, and 12 cases in the federal prison system. These figures probably represent only the tip of the iceberg. Most of the prison AIDS cases are in the Northeast, and most of them are I.V. drug users. In New York, for example, where most of the cases have been diagnosed, nearly two-thirds of them are I.V. drug users.

AIDS is a viral disease for which no cure has yet been found. It strips the body of its ability to fend off infection, cancer, and other foreign agents. The disease is apparently transmitted through the exchange of body fluids, as in some kinds of sexual contact, shared intravenous drug use, or blood transfusions.

The lack of understanding about how AIDS can be spread has created a lot of fear. AIDS cannot be spread through casual contact with an infected individual. You cannot get AIDS by being near the affected person or by sharing towels. The head of the Centers for Disease Control called the likelihood of school children passing AIDS "much less likely than the chance of the boiler that heats the (school) building blowing up." AIDS is not transmitted through the air (sneezes, coughs) or from objects an infected person may have used (water glasses, toilet seats, etc.).

With all these things in mind, there are some questions we should be asking: Should the HTLV-III antibody test be voluntary or mandatory for prisoners? If the results of such a test are positive, should that fact be made known to the population and guard staff as a whole? And, lastly, should those with positive test results be quarantined from the mainline prisoners? The answer to these questions must be based upon objective realities rather than subjective impressions, on fact rather than fear.

Based upon the research this writer has done, the correct answer to each of the above questions is resolved in favor of the tested prisoner. Testing should be available on a voluntary basis, for those who want it, although because of the inaccuracy of the tests and the possibility of abuse in use of the results, prisoners are encouraged *not* to take the tests.

Test results should remain a private matter between doctor and patient, and under no circumstances be made public. And finally, those with positive results should not be isolated unless the disease is advanced to the point where hospitalization is required.

[An AIDS political and medical information packet is available free to prisoners by writing: Mike/*GCN* PP, 167 Tremont St., Boston, MA 02111.]

AIDS Resource List

AIDS Action Committee — 16 Haviland Street, Boston, MA 02115, 536-7733.

Education and support group for people with AIDS, their families, lovers, friends, and health care providers. Provides speakers, conducts forums, rap groups, hospice-trained volunteers, hotline information and referrals. Associated with Fenway Community Health Center.

AIDS Action Line — 536-7733 or Massachusetts toll-free AIDS hotline, 1-800-235-2331.

AIDS Action Committee service, information, referrals and befriending about AIDS.

AIDS Hotline — Community Infectious Disease Epidemiology Program, City of Boston, 424-5916.

Staff of public health nurses answer questions about AIDS, make referrals. Collects city-wide data from hospitals on AIDS cases, forwards data to Centers for Disease Control. Officially determines number of cases probable and under investigation.

Fenway Community Health Center — 16 Haviland Street, Boston, MA 02115, 267-7573.

A gay-sensitive health care facility. Hotline information, medical work-ups, diagnosis, referrals, counseling. Participates in research efforts.

Gay and Lesbian Counseling Services — 600 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02111, 542-5188.

Provides individual and group therapy. Groups available for friends and lovers of people with AIDS. (Services provided

without regard for individual's ability pay.) Counseling and HTLV-III blood screening services for individuals concerned with exposure to the virus associated with AIDS. Co-sponsored with Department of Public Health. (522-4090)

Gay and Lesbian Hotline — 426-9371, Monday-Friday, 6:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m. Provides information on AIDS, makes referrals. Associated with Gay and Lesbian Counseling Services.

Haitian Committee on AIDS in Massachusetts — 177 Harvard Street, Dorchester, MA 02124, 436-2848.

Provides information, referrals, support and emergency assistance to Haitians with AIDS and their families.

Mayor's Committee on AIDS — 709A Boston City Hall, Boston, MA 02201, 725-3307.

Coordinates efforts of federal, state, and city health agencies, produces educational material, collects data on cases, reviews policy. Umbrella organization. Media outlet. Conducts forums and provides speakers, distributes AIDS brochures, referrals.

National Gay Task Force Hotline — 1-800-221-7044.

Toll-free national hotline run by NGTF to provide information and referrals.

Springfield Downtown Ministry/Council of Churches — 293 Bridge Street, #205, Springfield, MA 01103-1402, 737-4125. Counseling and referrals.

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Boston Gay Men's Chorus Rings in the New Year Men's Voices in Harmony

Strike the Harp and Join the Chorus, *Boston Gay Men's Chorus*. Robert Barney, music director, December 14, 1985, Jordan Hall at New England Conservatory of Music, Boston.

By Charles Henry Fuller

After the reassuring crunch of that last piece of foil-wrapped candy landing in a bag of Halloween goodies, our ears turn to the sounds of the United States' favorite obsession — the holiday season. The din raised during this two-month period of public excess on parade is impossible to avoid. Along with the whirring wheels of over-stuffed shopping carts and the clatter of knives and forks on over-stuffed plates, we are surrounded by the perpetual gurgle of seasonal music. Regardless of what we do or no longer believe in, we accept that Chanukah, Christmas, and New Year's Day are inextricably bound to music and music-making.

In their recent concert, Boston Gay Men's Chorus (BGMC) cut through much of the outward show of the holiday season and succeeded in sharing a fair measure of the musical and spiritual joy of this time of year. The 65 members of the chorus sang with an admirable balance of musical intelligence and expression. Clearly, Robert Barney, BGMC's new director, was able to impart much of his own musical integrity to the chorus. The audience was treated to a program of high quality by one of Boston's most distinctive musical groups.

BGMC's program drew upon sacred music from the Judeo-Christian tradition as well as many secular holiday favorites. Of particular note was a seamless performance of the "Wassail Song," which closed the first half of the concert. Here, all the things that BGMC does best were apparent — a wonderful sense of ensemble, an individual character to each vocal section, carefully gauged dynamics, clearly enunciated text, and a fresh understanding of musical style. Other highlights included a "Simple Gifts" which was just that, a haunting, terraced "O Holy Night," and a shimmering "Carol of the Bells." The traditional favorites following intermission ("Sleigh Ride," "Winter Wonderland," etc.) were fine examples of taste over sentimentality. These performances were crisp, clean, and musically rewarding. The sing-along at the end of the concert remained a particular favorite with the audience, who

sang out with high-spirited enthusiasm.

The only disappointment of the evening was the *Magnificat* of Marc-Antoine Charpentier, an extended piece of such modest musical interest I wonder at its inclusion. This score offers its fruits grudgingly, and thus, needs more rather than less musical attention if it is to be successful. The long, instrumental introduction was made longer by slovenly, wooden playing. Though the *Magnificat* lies well within BGMC's artistic grasp, I question Barney's use of full chorus on a piece so dependent upon the listener's ability to follow the individual vocal parts in a linear rather than homophonic way. Much of the flaccid, murky singing could have been avoided by using fewer voices. Though BGMC's performance of the "Gloria" section of the work genuinely approached excitement, it arrived too late to hold my interest.

The scheduling of the *Magnificat* raises the more serious question of programming. While this concert's length was trimmed down to handsome proportions

it is avoidable. Musically, Barney's work and that of the chorus is quite fine. What a shame to have their efforts diminished by listless programming.

A special source of pleasure throughout the concert was that each piece was interpreted for the deaf by two singers. (Regrettably, none of the soloists was credited in the program.) Their individual, and later, joint interpretations, while crucial to the enjoyment of the deaf members of the audience, added significantly to the appreciation of the entire audience. "'Twas the Night Before Christmas" stands out in my mind both as a wonderful aural and visual accomplishment. The interpreter in this case was himself deaf. His performance spoke eloquently of our collective need to hear all of our community's voices.

In these days when the gay community is under attack from every corner, when our affectional preferences are constantly presented in terms of perversion, disease, and death, the importance of gay and lesbian choruses must not be trivialized. BGMC, like its brother and sister groups across



Debbie Rich

Chorus members entranced in a song

from the excesses of last year, programming still remains a problem for BGMC. So many of these selections, though competently rendered, sounded like the same piece. I do not mean to minimize the considerable difficulty involved in designing an interesting program which takes into consideration the strengths and weaknesses of an amateur, all-male chorus; however, more attention needs to be paid to the overall pace of the evening. This is as much a musical as theatrical concern. No performing group should bore its audience, especially when

the United States and Canada, puts itself in a highly visible position on our behalf. Its members assert that we love our lives, we love one another, and we love the creation and sharing of anything beautiful, however fleeting. Nothing that creates a memory can be entirely bad, since in moving beyond the moment into the future, we are able to reflect on a particular occurrence, to savor it, and hopefully to learn whatever it has to teach us over time. In this concert, BGMC left behind many musical, political, and spiritual memories.

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Comedian Unearths Saturday Night Live Routines Magnusun Performs Reruns

Occupational Hazards (*The Minimum Wages of Sin*), Brattle Theatre, December 12, 13, 14. Written, directed, and performed by Ann Magnusun. Co-written, co-directed by William Fleet Live-ly. Associate Producer Lauren Lowenthal Swift.

By Regina Gillis

Ann Magnusun has been billed as the latest icon in performance art, combining the talents of Laurie Anderson and Lily Tomlin. The *New York Times Magazine* has gone so far as to pen her one of New York's celebrated yuppie-Bohemians, able to turn a profit from avant-garde art. But after her performance Thursday, December 12, calling Ann Magnusun anything more than an aspiring comedienne would be a mistake.

Magnusun, like Tomlin and ex-Not-Ready-for-Prime-Time player Gilda Radner, proves her versatility as a character comedienne by presenting a total of ten different characters in a two-hour show.

The Dec. 12 show opened with a flag-laden hybrid of Miss America and the Statue of Liberty (a la Bette Midler), who welcomed the audience to her "teeming shores." This Mrs. America spoke in a sharply accentuated "TV-Speak," promising an evening of "whiter whites, brighter brights, and Classic Cokes."

Where Magnusun differs from Tomlin and Radner, and probably where the New York yuppie-Bohemians consider her a Laurie

Anderson clone, is with Magnusun's use of video throughout *Occupational Hazards*. The video shorts enable her simply to change costume, while providing an easy and accessible way for Magnusun to drive home her theory of mindless television causing mindlessness. "Mrs. America" breaks quickly into the "News at Noon," hosted by Kimberly Crump, who Mrs. America calls the "Ethel Merman of Entertainment."

Again, this segment borrows extensively from *Saturday Night Live*'s "Weekend Update" by portraying broadcast journalists as pompous and superficial. Crump (Ann Magnusun), as part of her "Women at Work" investigative series, profiles a child prostitute, Chick Ann McNugget. McNugget (also Magnusun) is a cross between an immature Bozo and a sleazy Raggedy Ann who provides the audience with a wonderful extended crotch shot. This posture is completely ignored by Crump, and ultimately exposes Magnusun's view of the shortcomings of TV news as shallow and insensitive.

In fact, much of *Occupational Hazards* derides television in one form or another. But all of Magnusun's targets are easy and predictable. If it is not television, then it is the New Conservatism, pyramid clubs, Satanic music, Hollywood groupie casting agents, advertising moguls, and yes, even the ubiquitous yuppie-Bohemians.

But among the humorous predictability are some real gems.

Magnusun had the crowd wanting more after a 15-minute video about the last day in the life of Beatrice Redenbacher of the popcorn family fame. Redenbacher had an identity crisis and a penchant for marrying "childless octogenarians," and became one of the world's wealthiest widows, although no one knew who she was. Cut to a vertical pan of the World Trade Center, follow the camera down a maze of corridors, and enter a dingy room littered with newspapers and empty frozen food packages. Magnusun reveals the "Beatrice" we, as gross consumers, have come to know and love. She has become a bedridden reptilian with five-inch fingernails and shrapneled teeth. Everywhere there are empty Redenbacher popcorn jars filled with urine. "Aunt Bea" eventually coughs herself to death during a phone conversation with her right-hand man, Bob, while a faith-healing service blares away in the background on a poorly tuned color TV. Beatrice dies a broken woman, unable to secure the "Beatrice" name securely in the tampon industry. Oh, the minimum wages of sin...

Magnusun's show ends with the reappearance of a disheveled Mrs. America, chained to a television set, leaving some real pearls of wisdom to the audience: "Boycott grapes and lettuce, question authority, and start your own religion." Could not have said it better myself, Lily, Bette, Laurie, Gilda, Sandra, Carol....

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SEX ON THE SCREEN

GAY MALE VIDEOS CUM OF AGE

By Christopher Wittke

The first-time video renter shuffles apprehensively to the counter.

"May I help you?" asks the clerk.

"Yes, I'll take Dumbo, The Ten Commandments, and, um..." whispering softly, "...Fisting Ballet."

* * *

The television has replaced the X-rated adult movie theater for many people in the mid-1980s. The enjoyment of at-home erotica before this decade was limited mainly to the print media — hard- and soft-core books and magazines. For those who sought motion in their pictures there were the eight-millimeter porn loops, of the type generally shown in peep-show booths, and the often scratchy and jumpy prints of full-length features shown in adult theaters.

As the high-tech concept of video cassette recorders (VCRs) has become more affordable during the past six or seven years, the boundaries of porn-to-go have shifted dramatically. Full-length erotic motion pictures are now available for personal viewing pleasure on the same television that for years was limited to bringing you over-the-air or cable programming.

Smoky cinemas and grimy peep booths are no longer your only choices for movie porn. Whether or not this is a positive development depends on individual perspective. Some would suggest that the impact of any film, porn or otherwise, is diminished on the small screen and with the lack of communal audience experience. Others maintain that since porn presents the basically private experience of explicit sexual expression, it is somehow more fitting to watch alone or with one or more relatively intimate friends.

Regardless, the greatest freedom the VCR now affords you is the opportunity to replace *Let's Make A Deal with Heatstroke*, or, say, *The Young and the Restless* with *The Young and the Hung*.

Picking out a film to watch is tricky because it isn't always easy to judge a tape by its cover. Sometimes the photos on the box bear little or no resemblance to the actual product. Perhaps taking home a randomly selected video tape — with a 50-50 prospect of it being a winner or a loser — is the 1985 equivalent of the cruising rituals of the 1970s.

* * *

"Hi, it's me," he says into the phone. "You won't believe what I'm watching on TV right now. A movie called 501, can you deal? The VCR couldn't have come at a better time in the social life of this voyeur. The guy across the alleyway bought mini-blinds a couple of weeks ago and ruined everything. What? Of course I'm kidding, my window looks out on a brick wall. Let me tell ya, I'm always a little embarrassed renting this stuff, but I figure they stock it in their store, so what the heck. I just told the guy I was renting it for my sister's Bachelorette Party...."

* * *

Sex videos are similar to nothing on television so much as the soap opera. Many people refuse to admit their pleasure at watching Erica Kane get her man on *All My Children* or, likewise, Richard Locke get his in *El Paso Wrecking Co.* Even this is changing drastically with the enduring popularity of serials like *Dallas* and the distinctly gay male community phenomenon that is *Dynasty*. It seems that more than a small handful of us are indulging in hard-core viewing as well, if the empty shelves of the sex-film stores during peak

video rental periods are any indication.

Sex films share the same concerns of power, lust, and love as do the soap operas. Porn scripts, if there are any story lines at all, can be as confusing as the soaps, but also can be watched and enjoyed from almost any point in the proceedings.

* * *

The two of them stared intently at the television screen. "It sure is different watching this with someone else," said one.

"How?" asked the other.

"It's easier to poke fun at the movies when there's someone watching with you. When I'm alone, I take them much more seriously. I cried at the end of one the other night."

"You cried?"

"Well, the orgy scene was so touching because the two lovers... (sniff)... excuse me, I have to go get a tissue."

"Hey," his friend called after him, "how can these two guys say things like, 'Yeah, yeah, that's right, you got it...' without moving their lips?"

"Maybe they're thinking it," he replied.

"These two don't look like they're thinkers to me, maybe ventriloquists."

* * *

A clerk at Box Office Video on Newbury Street in Boston says that porn films are rented by "all different types of people. It's a huge portion of the video business. The most popular videos are the brand new ones, but of course there are the old classics. Most films cost about \$70 apiece, so the bulk of the business is rental. There are some people who buy them, however, the serious collectors...."

* * *

"Dear Diary," he wrote, "I'm feeling more secure and no longer have to rent one so-called legitimate film for each porn video I take. I'm happy to report that I'm now down to a three-to-one ratio. The entire Gage Trilogy and Wild Strawberries for today. Still, I haven't found that 100 percent perfect video for me. I know it's out there and I'm going to keep on looking until I find it. Maybe someday..."

* * *

For everyone from the occasional renter to the serious collector there is a large selection of video erotica from which to choose. There are countless sub-genres appealing to just about every personal taste imaginable.

The growing popularity of the May-December Daddy phenomenon is reflected in the recently released *Chip Off the Old Block* and Arthur (Buddies) Bressan's *Daddy Dearest*.

Relatively old-time classics like the decade-old *Born to Raise Hell* are available for the S&M enthusiast in all their realistic, not-for-the-squeamish glory.

CheckerBoard Video has released the interracial *Black Orient Express* and *Black Sex Therapy*.

Therapy is the name of yet another video, this one involving a shrink who diagnoses every patient as having "the very rare Casanova Complex." This movie has a high proportion of uncircumcised men in its cast, indicating that there are few fetishes or trends which remain unexplored or unexploited.

HUGE Video Co. has tapped the beefy, muscular men with genitalia-on-a-grand-scale market with one of the hottest-selling gay porn videos ever: *A Matter of Size*. This company's latest release, Matt Sterling's *Inch by Inch*, is, according to one local video store clerk, "impossible to keep on the shelves. We rent this constantly." This is probably in no small part due to the video box cover photo of star Tom Brock looking like every Calvin Klein underwear model combined. The film, which is short on plot and has minimal dialogue, features Brock in some sweaty masturbation and oral sex scenes and ends with the captioned promise that "Tom Brock will go all the way in Matt Sterling's next film — coming in February, 1986." Porn films may not sell detergent like daytime dramas, but this one manages to create a market as overtly as the most calculated Stephen Spielberg prequel. It is common knowledge that sex sells on commercial television: commercial porn just sells sex — and more sex.

Most sex videos feature anywhere from five to 20 minutes of previews for other tapes. The most scintillating scenes, generally cum shots, are spliced together to entice the viewer into the purchase or rental of other films by the same company. In many cases the previews are better than the actual films.

* * *

"Hiya. Listen, sit down, I don't want to hear you or the phone hit the floor. No, I'm not in love again, thank you. I've just gotta tell you I think I've finally found my Dream Video. It's called Rangers and I love it. I've watched it three times so far; I even had my straight neighbor watch it with me. Well, she was a little nervous, she didn't stop talking once. You know, she kept saying things like, 'Gee, God, I can't believe I'm watching this with you. Hey he's kinda cute. Woah! That one's gorgeous! Holy cow! It's kinda hard to figure out what they're doing. Ooo- Doesn't that hurt?...'"

* * *

Porn films are, like soap operas, beginning to deal with contemporary issues. ABC's *One Life to Live* has dealt in-vitro fertilization; H.I.S. Video's recently released *LifeGuard* features exclusively safe-sex techniques.

Until now, the AIDS crisis seems to have had a more subtle effect on porn products. Withdrawal before climax is certainly nothing new, but masturbation and hot talk seem to be primary focuses in some recent videos.

Continued on page 11

Hot Dykes Stay Tuned. Next week we'll take a look at lesbian sex videos—the old and the new

Lifestyle Tapes Broaden Gay Male Video Market

The Gay Male Couple and High Touch
Humanus Home Video
Los Angeles, CA

Reviewed by Bill Kreidler

In 1974, Doctors David McWhirter and Andrew Mattison began a five-year study of 156 male couples, and the information they gathered went into their 1984 book, *The Male Couple*. It has now been adapted into a video tape of the same name, produced by Humanus Home Video.

Using what they admit is a limited definition of "gay couple" (i.e., two self-identified gay men, living together for one year and calling themselves a couple), McWhirter and Mattison have charted six distinct stages in gay male relationships, each with its own characteristics. The 90 minutes of *The Male Couple* video presents their findings, alternating the authors' explanations of each stage with short vignettes that dramatize the issues being discussed. Stage one, for example, typically lasts one year and is characterized by high sexual activity, merging of the selves, equalization of the partnership, and limerence, which is the preoccupation of each partner with the other.

The strength of this video is primarily the engaging and clever way in which the rather dry material is enlivened. The vignettes are fun to watch, dealing as they do with the development of a "typical" gay couple through some 20 years of their relationship, and are fairly well performed by actors Hank Thompson and Gary Winters. While the presentations by McWhirter and Mattison are less compelling, they do convey a benign supportiveness and even occasional flashes of mild humor. (Commenting on their finding that most gay couples don't exhibit nesting behavior until the second year of the relationship, McWhirter notes that once they begin, "No one makes pretty like gay men.") They also are mercifully non-judgmental about such issues as extra-relationship sexual activity, and even coupling

itself, and make it very clear that they do not believe gay male relationships should be patterned on non-gay ones.

The Male Couple has several weaknesses, however. The first is the language, which could drive you up the wall. I have spent enough time with psychologists and other social scientists to know that none of them is capable of speaking plain English, so I was not too surprised that this video relies heavily on psycho-babble of the "this is a wonderfully high-merged couple" type. McWhirter and Mattison take it an extra step, however, and talk about "expectational" needs, and their hope that the video will be "assistive." There are even grammatical lapses that indicate a certain sloppiness in the production of the video.

A more serious weakness is the lack of certainty as to whether the video is simply presenting information or is attempting to be a self-help guide. The video itself concentrates on presenting information, but often dips into the self-help ("assistive") mode, and the video jacket clearly presents it as such. It does a very good job on the former, and a terrible job on the latter. Part of this is due to the weaknesses inherent in stage theories.

In addition to their love of mutilating language, social scientists love stage theories that chronicle the development of a "typical" anything: child, adult, couple, horse. Ironically, most people are not typical or average, and in applying a stage theory to their own lives, will generally find it of limited usefulness. In this case, while comfort may be derived from knowing that some of the issues in your relationship are shared by other couples — it's always nice to know that you're not

the only one going crazy — the stages can be more confusing than enlightening. ("But we've only been together for three months and we're already in stage 3. And last week we were in stage 4!") Knowing what stage you or your relationship is in will not necessarily answer any questions or help resolve any issues. Although McWhirter and Mattison offer several cautions and disclaimers appropos of this, they should be much more explicit about how couples might use the information presented.

Despite these criticisms, I found *The Male Couple* to be an informative and interesting addition to our knowledge about gay male lifestyles. I hope that McWhirter and Mattison will not stop here with their research, but will go on to research some of the other types of gay male couples and the issues facing them.

High Touch, also from Humanus Home Video, is less ambitious than *The Male Couple*. Its goal is simply to instruct men in the art of massaging other men. Its 90 minutes demonstrate how to give a relaxing massage (as opposed to an erotic massage) based on a variety of massage techniques. Written by and featuring a San Francisco chiropractor, Dr. William Palaskas, whose approach is refreshingly straight-forward and factual, *High Touch* also encourages the viewer to relax and have fun with the massage.

One aspect of both *The Male Couple* and *High Touch* that deserves comment is their low-key but thoroughly gay perspective. It is nice, for once, to view instructional material that does not have to be translated from non-gay to gay. Humanus Home Video is a new company, based in Los Angeles and established by former *Advocate* editor Peter Frisch. It is dedicated to producing videos that examine various aspects of gay male life. I hope they will do many more. But please, no more "assistive."



Safe Porn — A New Eroticism

Life Guard — The Safe Sex Video
H.I.S. Video, a division of VCA Labs, Inc.
Chatsworth, CA

All Hands on Dick — A Jack Off Party
The Institute for Advanced Study of Human Sexuality and the Sexologists Health Project
San Francisco, CA

Reviewed by Christopher Wittke

For many of us, life seems to be imitating the second act of Martin Sherman's *Bent*, in which two gay men imprisoned in one of Hitler's concentration camps make love without ever touching one another. Instead they vividly describe the sexual gymnastics which they would normally perform if only they could, except that to do so would guarantee even quicker extermination at the hands of the Nazis. With the advent of AIDS, most gay men have felt forced to adapt their sexual behavior accordingly, and in an age when fantasy is clearly more sane than reality, porn has come in very handily indeed.

To some people there is a growing ethical concern that porn that depicts high-risk sexual activities encourages viewers to become a small link in a very big health-damaging chain. This is not an entirely new moral dilemma. Millions spend millions to watch football players risk their necks, boxers bash one another's brains out, and hockey stars fight their way into the intensive care unit. These too are high-risk activities, and like the stars of other contact sports, one can only assume that today's porn star is well aware of the risk inherent in his profession. But for those unable to reconcile the apparent porn/reality contradiction, and for the rest of us who just might be looking for something new and different in our video delights, come two examples of what may become the bold new face of gay male porn. H.I.S. Video has just released *Life Guard — The Safe Sex Video*, while something called the Institute for Advanced Study of Human Sexuality and the Sexologists Health Project is currently finishing up post-production

work on a video entitled *All Hands On Dick — A Jack Off Party*.

Life Guard is a high-gloss California porn film presenting safe sex activities only. Featuring a large cast, including such porn stalwarts as Leo Ford, Rick Donovan, and the very hot Giorgio Canali, the video features six vignettes designed to "show you just how much fun 'playing it safe' can truly be!"

After a fairly standard opening scene in which two men enjoy a workout on a Nautilus machine as well as on one another's nipples, Dr. Robert K. Bolan, president of the San Francisco AIDS Foundation, delivers a two-minute monologue regarding the need for safe sex practices as well as safe sex porn. He says, "By affirming our sexuality in ways that are erotic, satisfying, and safe, we can move away from uncertainty, anxiety, and frustration...." The action continues with scenes of, as described by Bolan, "fantasy, mutual masturbation, massage, fondling, and solo use of toys."

The major flaw of *Life Guard* is a definite sameness in each of the scenes; there are just a few variables in each. This one features a condom, that one a dildo or two, and another has *two* blond men and a brunette instead of just one blond as in most of the other scenes. Perhaps in his attempt to avoid risks of a sexual nature, producer/director Richard Morgan chose to avoid structural and other cinematic risks as well. But we're talking about porn here and innovation isn't always a top priority.

In spite of the fact that all of the scenes are dialogue-free until their respective slow-motion cumshots, over which is dubbed the mantra-like "Yeah-yeah — ohhh...." there are some pretty hot images here. It is somewhat disconcerting to see some of the more familiar porn stars stopping at the foreplay level of their previous films, but it's also rather refreshing. The scene in which one man uses his, we assume, own personal clean dildo while watching porn video is particularly steamy, as is the final scene in which a solo jack-off artist fantasizes about the other stars of the film in solo j.o. shots of their

own. This is probably the modern-day equivalent of all of those finale/orgy scenes of the porn of yesteryear. H.I.S. Video is to be commended for the attempt at presenting safe sex practices in a stimulating way. Perhaps they will one day assemble a catalogue of safe sex films as diverse as their un-safe counterparts which are previewed for about 15 minutes after the conclusion of *Life Guard*.

Members of the San Francisco Jacks appear in *All Hands on Dick — A Jack Off Party*, and the video delivers exactly what the title promises. The demonstration tape I saw wasn't quite finished and the company spokesman said it was completely missing a two-minute discussion of safe sex practices. Regardless, this video is permeated by a certain natural funky heat that is lost in most big-time productions.

A crew of about a dozen men assembles in a room, armed with every type of creative j.o. party prop imaginable: hand cream, paper towels, rubber gloves(!?), squirt guns, refreshments, etc., and the festivities begin. There are all sorts of types at this party: a hefty daddy, a mysterious leather-hooded butch, lots of well-muscled Joe Average Clones, and even a surprisingly endearing hippie who, when fed a grape, responds, "Energy food, mmmm, thank you."

As the action intensifies, hairy pectorals are squeezed, napes of necks are kissed and bitten, buttocks are playfully slapped, and individuals masturbate in pairs and large groups as hands fondle everything in sight. One man enjoys a particularly long and histrionic orgasm, and after about 20 seconds of screaming, a fellow party-goer asks dryly, "Did you come, Carl?"

This video doesn't take itself too seriously — as well it shouldn't. A j.o. party ought to be silly and frenzied and that's just what *All Hands On Dick* is. The sense of camaraderie and uninhibited fun which is evident in this video will, I hope, be an inspiration to other video producers as well as to today's hip party planner. Perhaps gay men everywhere will start throwing these types of extravaganzas. Maybe I'll get some invitations.

NCBLG Conference

Continued from page 3

A Family Gathers

King, Lawrence Washington, and David Naylor discussed the growing threat of AIDS to the Black community in general and the Black gay community in particular, laying the groundwork for NCBLG's AIDS Advisory Board; "Building Positive Black Gay and Lesbian Self Images," focusing on the impact of racism, internalized self-hatred and internalized homophobia, and substance abuse in our community, with the leadership of Dr. Julius Johnson, Dr. Vickie Mays, Barbara Smith, and John Patterson; and "Black Lesbian and Gay Oral History," enriching the knowledge about Black lesbian and gay pre-Stonewallers, led by 83-year-old Black lesbian activist Mabel Hampton.

In addition to the workshop sessions, there was time set aside for men's and women's caucuses to discuss such issues as "building lesbian leadership" and "men loving men."

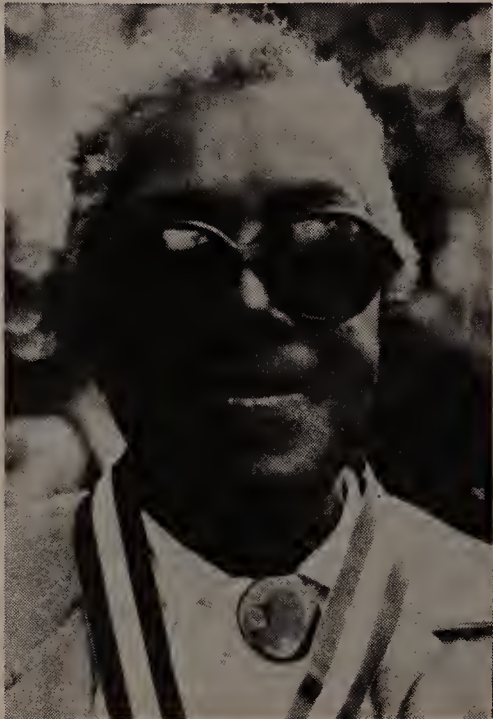
Members of this family could not gather in celebration without sharing their performance skills. Media Coordinator Michelle Parkerson planned cultural programs which included screenings of *Before Stonewall*, *Hair Piece: A Film for Nappy-Headed People*, *Got to Make This Journey: Sweet Honey in the Rock*, and her most recent work-in-progress, *Stormé: A Life in the Jewel Box*. This hour-long documentary explores the history of the Jewel Box Revue through the life story of Stormé DeLaverie who served as the emcee for the multi-racial cabaret of female impersonators.

Live entertainment was presented by Washington-based dancer/choreographer George Bellinger, writers Pat Parker, Essex Hemphill, Cheryl Clarke, Irare Sabasu, Jewelle Gomez, and members of the Blackheart Collective. Along with Ortez Alderson and Willie Barnes, Haitian playwright Assoto Saint staged a stellar performance piece excerpted from his *Rising to the Love We Need* and *New Love Songs*. Washington, D.C. composer Wayson Jones and West Coast recording artists Gwen Avery and Blackberri supplied jazz, folk, and R&B tunes.

The highlight of the Thanksgiving

weekend is, of course, dinner. And ours took the form of a ballroom banquet on Saturday evening, honoring the commitment, energy, example, and life of our eldest present family member, Mabel Hampton — also a member of Senior Action in a Gay Environment (SAGE) and the Lesbian Herstory Archives.

When the family gathered around the lobby of the St. Louis Sheraton, sharing hugs and bestowing well-wishes and goodbye kisses, we were nourished and filled with a new conviction and commitment to "Black Pride and Solidarity: The New Movement of Black Lesbians and Gays" until we meet again for our next reunion, in Atlanta Georgia, in April, 1987.



Mabel Hampton

We must make Black leadership recognize Black gays as an important source of power and support.

'It Was All About Home'

fight old battles as we insist on banding together as Black people and forcing society to take some responsibility for the ills that infect it. She pointed out we must make Black leadership recognize Black gays as an important source of power and support.

A wonderful element of the conference was the lunch-time "Informances," in which artists were encouraged to perform their own work and discuss their craft. It was an important way to share the difficulty of being recognized as Black artists. The one session I attended on Saturday featured a poet and singer from D.C. — Steve Langley — who discussed his combination of poetry and song. Langley said he hoped to take his work to gay bars and other gay meeting places which have not made room for their community's artists. Dr. Jessie Fields, a poet from Chicago, read words she described as those she "seized to save her life." New York City actor/director John Patterson performed sections from his touring show, *The Dream Keeper Speaks*, which is a dramatic enactment of the work of Langston Hughes. He also performed several hilarious poems by Paul Laurence Dunbar, the United States' first nationally known Afro-American poet but someone whose work is rarely heard today.

The Saturday evening banquet was in honor of Mabel Hampton, from the Bronx, who took the first airplane flight of her 83 years to attend the conference. Her life as an entertainer, blue-collar worker, and political activist, as well as her enduring 45-year relationship with the late Lillian Foster, have brought her national accolades and admiration. She appears in numerous documentaries about gay life, including *Before Stonewall*. In Barbara Smith's introduction of Hampton, Smith said we can all look to Mabel Hampton to counter the

lies they tell about us: "When they say that gayness is a white disease, that it is the death of our race, that Black women become lesbians because we're too ugly to find a man, that our love is a conspiracy to undermine the struggle for Black liberation, we must look proudly to Mabel Hampton and to ourselves."

The banquet also introduced three members of the Black gay community in London (Brixton), which has suffered racial strife for several years. They came from London to express their solidarity and to bring information about police attacks on the Black community there, and about the state of organizing in the Black lesbian and gay communities.

In the final plenary session, two members of the London contingent, Mark Vassen and Dorothea Smartt, made an important plea for new structures in which we can share with each other. They asked that NCBLG search for ways to shed the academic and hierarchical structures that traditionally have been oppressive to us and can unintentionally isolate us from the rest of the Black community. Many people attending the conference missed the chance to experience the St. Louis Black community, and people suggested that for the next conference (Spring 1987, Atlanta) we spend some of the considerable money that is necessary for such a gathering in the Black community.

Nonetheless, all agreed the conference provided us with the much-needed chance to say to the world, "We Are Here!!!" Our name displayed in the Sheraton lobby made us proud in light of the days when the only Blacks in some hotel lobbies were those carrying bags.

The final cultural events were a cornucopia of Black brilliance. Michelle Parkerson, of Washington, D.C., co-chair of the conference, showed videotapes she had produced. One, *Gotta Make This Journey*, a documentary on acappella singing group Sweet Honey in the Rock, was a moving, Sunday morning singalong. The other was *Stormé: A Life in the Jewel Box Revue*. It featured Stormé DeLaverie who worked in

Continued on page 12

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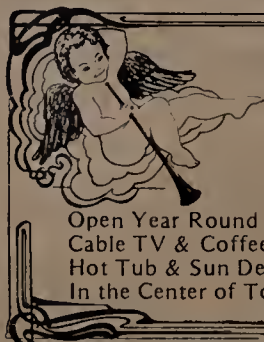
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Yodd M. Anderson

Men's Videos Cum of Age

Continued from page 8

In both *ScreenPlay* and the aforementioned *Inch By Inch* there are similar steamy scenes in which a closed window separates the two aroused participants. These scenes are no less erotic than their more contact-oriented counterparts.

Further effects of the health crisis on the porn industry's future obviously remain to be seen. The use of condoms is sure to become more widespread, but it is doubtful that the majority of sex films in the near future will completely eradicate risky activities.

However, some porn stars like Glenn "Mr. Safe Sex" Swann, Steve (*The Hustlers*) Collins, and David (*The Biggest One I Ever Saw*) Connors, among others, have taken to the road in safe-sex advocacy revues. In interviews some stars have taken an almost messianic "we take chances so that you won't have to" attitude in justifying their own high-risk, large-number-of-partners, recorded-on-tape-for-the-whole-world-to-see sexual activities. Gay male culture if nothing is not ever-changing. Porn, as well as porn

renters, will change along with it.

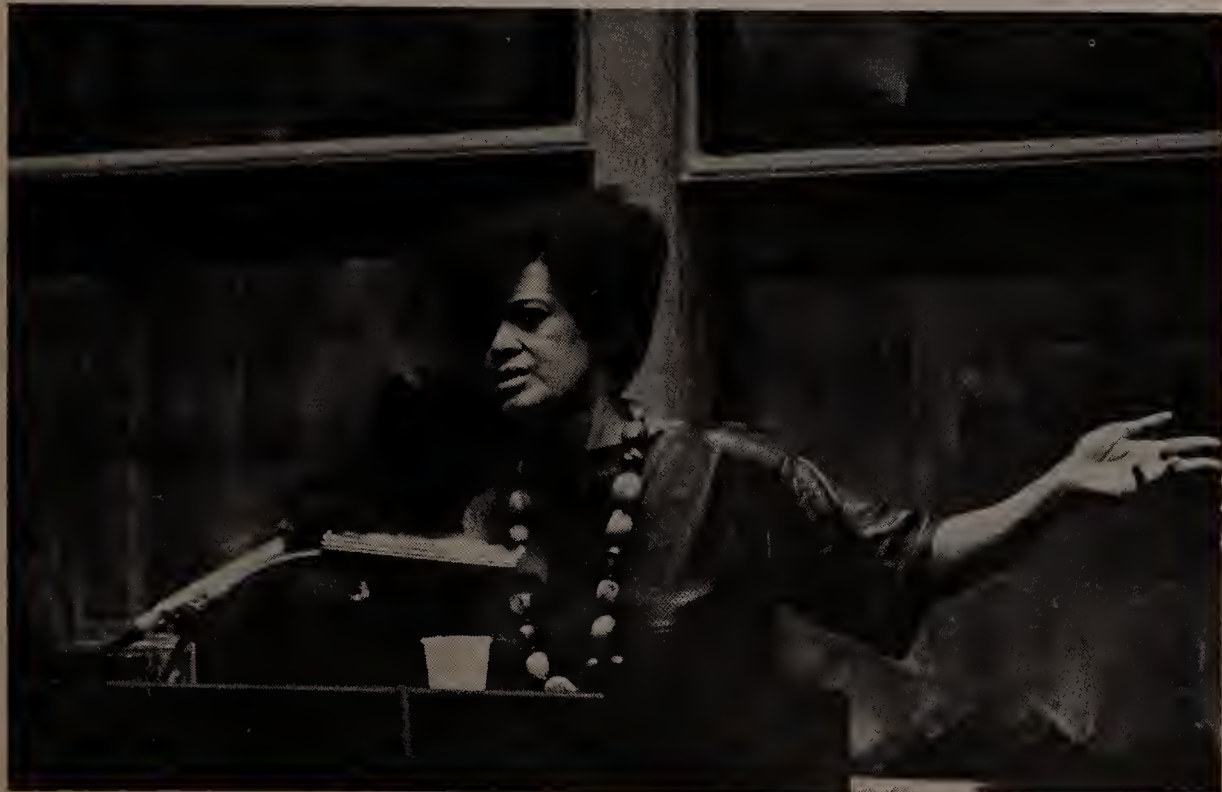
* * *

After renewing his video club membership for another year, the formerly meek customer eases up to the video store counter. The clerk smiles. "Hi, what can I get you?"

"Gimme Like A Horse, One in a Billion, Chain Reactions, and... Maybe I should get Das Boot, I missed it in the theater. Nah, throw in Fisting Ballet again. I love a classic."

* * *

Toni Cade Bambara — Writer



Marilyn Humphries

Toni Cade Bambara began her December 4 Cambridge reading with a rousing audience-response retelling of Goldilocks, the blond "burglar child vandal child thief" whose reputation has been preserved by twisting the facts: "Did she knock on the door?" Bambara goaded the audience, demanding an answer. "Did she act like she had some good home training?" And later, "did she 'fess up" to her parents? No! "She said some bears was chasin' her!"

Bambara kept a racially mixed audience of over 200 people at rapt attention as she drove home her points about media manipulation of facts and language and about the need for people to face the truth, no matter how painful and contrary to prevailing wisdom. The centerpiece of the evening was a reading of several segments from her novel-in-progress, about the impact of the Atlanta child murders of the early '80s on a fictional Black family and neighborhood.

The story is written in Bambara's tumbling, wordy, adjectival style. "I edit for ear first," she told the audience during the question-and-answer period following her reading. "If I can't tap my foot to it, I don't trust it." Her own rhythm is based more on be-bop than on gospel, since she grew up among street-corner speechifying trade unionists who frowned on church — a background that helps account for the overtly political nature of her writing as well. The story is told largely from the point of view of child characters, capturing the feeling of confusion, fear, and abandonment children are bound to feel when adults are engrossed in crisis — the irreparable, incalculable damage the murders did to those left living.

Though fictional, the novel's emotional essence is based on journal entries written by Bambara in Atlanta at the time; its facts about the murders and Black community response are based on knowledge and access to information Bambara gained both as a participant in that community and through her position as a prominent Black writer living in Atlanta. National reporters would call her looking for information, she explained gleefully, and she would get them to do the legwork, following each other's leads and reporting back to her.

Writing the book has been a wrenching experience for Bambara, who is primarily a short-story writer. "My temperament is the 50-yard dash," she said. "When a big book calls you, you sigh and say, 'Why me?' But you either run with it or get burned.... [Writing the book] has taken every tooth out of my head, grayed my hair, driven me stark, raving mad." But, she added, she prefers madness to the collaboration and "amnesia" that come with accepting official versions of reality.

Though Bambara has always needed to write, and jokes about how "genius counts for something," it wasn't until she went to Cuba in 1973 and saw how seriously writing was taken there that she began to see it as "a legitimate way to participate in the struggle." Joking that she "likes to eat regularly," she said it is only very recently that she has been able to support herself through writing and has begun to identify herself as a writer. No one in the audience in Cambridge doubted that identity for an instant.

— Pam Mitchell



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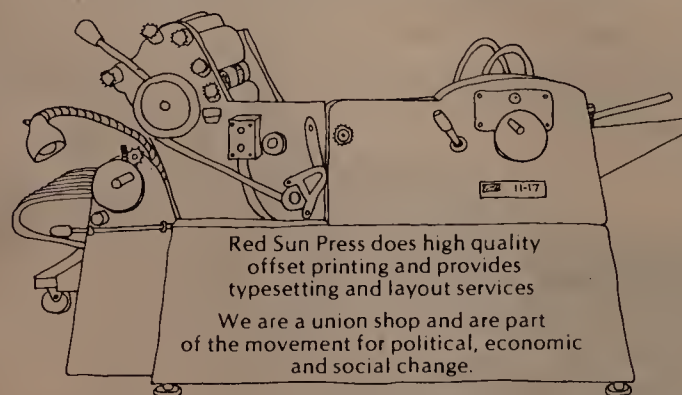
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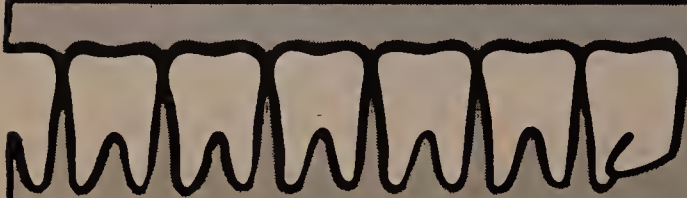
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'Home'

Continued from page 10

male drag as the only female member of the Jewel Box Review of the 1950s and '60s. The documentary, for which Parker-son is still raising funds, will include history of the art of female impersonation, from Africa and the Middle East, through the Shakespearean stage and the Folies-Bergère.

The banquet honoring Mabel Hampton also featured an exciting roster of talented writers and performers, many of whom, although veteran performers, had never worked on the same stage together before. Essex Hemphill and pianist Wayson Jones, performance artists Assoto Saint and his troupe, singers Gwen Avery and Blackberri (too rarely heard on the east coast!), and poets Cheryl Clarke, Pat Parker, and myself were a great lineup if I do say so!

This year, the National Coalition changed its name to include "lesbian"; women achieved parity on the board; the Mabel Hampton Life Achievement Award was in-

stituted; a very successful conference was held in St. Louis; and plans were made for the next conference in Atlanta. In one of the panels, Essex Hemphill said, "Our stories and our lives will continue to be fragmented until we pull them together...." As I watched people in the hotel lobby carefully safeguarding business cards and slips of notebook paper with addresses in their conference folders, it was clear that we were pulling together and we would take the message back to our communities, both Black and gay, across the country.

* * *

A postscript: Yes, we can do these important things independently, and it is crucial to our survival. As is the support of the rest of the gay community. Special thanks to Marian and Art of the St. Louis Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays for their hospitality and kindness. Yes, it was all about home.

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the boston alliance of gay
and lesbian youth



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5 If's seek 6th foe huge sunny house. Semi-coop, Semi veg. Sorry no more pets—we have a cat. JP near JP Licks. \$200+. Call am & pm: 524-0421. (25)

3 f's seek f for beautiful Somerville house with 1 kitten on Spring Hill side street. Share food and chores, no cigs. Jan-June. \$187+. Call 253-6683. (eves best.) (25)

North Cambridge—2 lesbian women want to share 2 bedroom duplex. No pets. \$225+ ph. 1/86. Call 576-3057. (25)
Rustic log home six acres land near Mass Pike, Rt 20—9. Two fieldstone fireplaces. Hot water heat. Ideal retirement home or animal business venture. Near lakes, hunting, riding trails. Principals only. Call (617) 347-3866 after 6 pm. (25)

F ROOMMATE WANTED

2 Lf's seeking 3rd for 3 bedroom apt. in JP, very near pond. Beautiful, sunny, woodfloors, fireplace, laundry, storage, roofdeck. (Have a dog, no more pets). Exp. chef preferred. \$360 heated. Jan. 1st or as soon as possible. 522-1953 if not in please leave message. (24)

UNION SQUARE SOMERVILLE

Lf, gay male seek responsible rmt for unique living situation in Victorian home. Porch, yard, parking. \$266/mo+util. No pets. 623-8567. Leave message. (24)

Non-smoking L sought for apt. near Porter Square. Rent \$250 including util. Available 1/1. Hardwood floors, convenient to T, laundry, shops. Call 628-0527. Leave message on machine. (25)

HOUSEMATES

L prof 30's seeks 2 roommates for house in Br. Vill. near T, laundry facil. Rent \$400 each incl. utils. Call 536-5450. (26)

HOUSING WANTED

Own br in loving holistic house by prof L 30, in shape, veg macro, good cook. Clean friendly resp. Prefer Brkl Vic. Call Tally 8-9 am ASAP 731-9231. (22)

APARTMENTS

DORCHESTER SAVIN HILL T AVAILABLE JANUARY

5 blocks to Savin Hill T, 4 rooms, nat wdwk, porch, yard and base stor. Own occ. \$450 unhtd, refs, 1st and last. Available 1/86. Jeff 825-1499. (25)

DORCHESTER APT.

LARGE 1 BR

In lovely Victorian house hrwd floors. 1½ baths, sunporch, yard. Desirable Melville Park area near Shawmut T. No pets, heated. \$595. 825-1912 or 482-7943. (26)

RESORTS

VERMONT GUESTHOUSE

Bed and cont. breakfast for Lesbians and Gay men in a country village house. 2 hours from Boston. Year round. Near lakes, hikes, skiing. Dave and Mike (802) 348-7840 (yr)

BED & BREAKFAST IN N.Y.

Enjoy a decadent weekend in a charming, lesbian owned, N.Y. brownstone—only 1 subway stop from Manhattan. Be pampered by having breakfast served in bed, and sipping a complimentary bottle of champagne on arrival. For more information call 718-625-2653. The RADCLYFFE HALL or 718-522-2828 (s17)

GABRIEL'S

Guest rooms and apartments. Centrally located. Hot tub, garden patio, cable tv, coffee. 104 Bradford St. Provincetown, MA 02657. Reservations: (617) 487-3232. Open year round. (yr)

CHECK'ER OUT AT THE CHECK'ER INN

Double rooms, coffee bt fireside, pkg, apts. also available. 1 block bay, open year round. 487-9029, 25 Winthrop St. P'town, MA 02657 (yr)

SPINDRIFT TROPICAL RESORT

"Tropically perfect—Perfectly tropical" (The Weekly News, Miami). Free brochure—Spindrift, 1212 Simonton, Key West, FL 33040. (305) 296-3432. Helen, Hostess. (43)

WHITE MOUNTAIN MAGIC

Come skl our miles of x-country trails, ice skate or snowshoe, soak in our hot tub, enjoy a sleigh ride or downhill ski. We've got it all—including a cozy fireplace and hundreds of books for those who prefer chairs to skis. Great mid-week discounts! The Highlands Inn, Box 118 G Bethlehem, NH 03574. (603) 869-3978. Grace + Judi innkeepers. (34)

ORGANIZATIONS

GAY LESBIAN AND JEWISH?

Am Tikva welcomes you. Activities include religious observances, discussions, potluck dinners, folk dancing, etc. For events, check GCN Calendar. Call (617) 782-8894 or write PO Box 11 Camb, MA 02238 (?)

"JOHNNY DIED TODAY..."

14 year old Joey will blow out his brains, Eddie will overdose and David will slash his wrists in the days to come. All because you're too scared to protect them. SASE for info, \$2 stamps 64 page newsletter. \$20 subsc/mbrshp. "REALITY INC.," PO Box 73, Paramus, NJ 07653. (?)

D.O.B.

Support orgnzn for lesbians, 1151 Mass Ave, Cambridge, Old Bap Chr. Raps every Tues, Thur 8pm. Special raps for 35+; parents; yngr women; baby bmr; singles; coming out; Issues forum. All 8pm. Monthly events, outing club, library. Info: 661-3633. All women invited to participate. (?)

LESBIANS

Are you Lesbian, Bisexual or unsure? Looking for a group to go? Come join us at BAGLY.

Call Tony, 497-8282

(13/32)

MAN/BOY LOVE

A support group for intergenerational relationships. For more information send \$1 to: NAMBLA—GCNAD at 537 Jones St. No. 8418, S.F., CA 94102 or PO Box 174, New York, NY 10018. (v.14.23)

HETEROSEXISM, RACISM

Sexism, anti-Semitism, multicultural issues. Workshops by national consultants for your organization (municipal, professional, political, educational) or business. Contact Equity Institute in Amherst, MA at (413)256-6902. Co-directors Carole Lanlgan Johnson, J.D., and Joan Lester Ed.D. (?)

BLACK AND WHITE MEN TOGETHER

Multiracial group for all people. Call (415) 431-1976 or write BWMT Suite 140, 580 Castro St., SF, CA 94114. (v14.15)

NEED HELP

GWF traveling south rte to NC, FL, New Orleans, Ala, Tx, New Mexico, Ar, San Diego need safe places to stay along the way. Contact Pat (617)628-1734 or (617)628-3986. Lvg. end of Jan. (26)

GOODS

THEA'S TAROT A DECK CELEBRATING WOMEN

78 bold black and white cards in an attractive marron box. Explanations included. \$16.50 postage paid Medusa Graphics PO Box 326 W. Somerville MA 02144. (26)

FOR SALE

WICKEDLY WITTY T-SHIRTS

200 + designs for gay people with a sense of humor. We ship anywhere. \$1.50 gets catalog. Public Image, 495 Ellis St. No. 204, SF, CA 94102. (26)

Black leather jacket. Winter weight, quilt lined. Perfect for cyclists, cop or security guard. Size 52—54, not cheap but worth the price. Days 391-3411. (c)

Singer double needle, zig—zag sewing machine. \$75.00. Call 391-3411. (c)

GCN SPECIALS

KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE PULSE OF THE NATION

GCN's news department is looking for someone to coordinate newsnotes. The job's responsibilities include reading newspapers from across the nation, selecting which stories can be digested as news notes, and writing the actual notes. The volunteer position requires an ongoing commitment of 5-8 hours a week, and can be divided among a group of people or taken in part. For more information, call Stephanie at 426-4469. Thanks. (c)

WRITERS

Help GCN cover the culture beat all over the nation. Plays, movies, concerts, performances, we want the latest word on the newest creations from coast to coast. If you'd like to join GCN's team of volunteer reviewers, send a letter and writing sample to: GCN Features, 167 Tremont St., 5th Floor, Boston MA 02111. (c)

HELP KEEP GCN HOT!

If you have an old spare space heater that nobody needs, + you want to donate it to a fabulous cause (GCN), call Mike 426-4469. (c)

Cassette recorder anyone? GCN depends on cassette recorders for its national news (which we often record over the phone.) If you have a working one you're not planning on using, call Mike at 426-4469. (If you have one with a transcription foot pedal, we promise to squeal and giggle and sigh and whatever else you like.) Thanks. (c)

HELP SPREAD THE WORD!

Do you know of places where people could benefit by having GCN around? Are you ever at places and wonder why we aren't there too? Well, we need your help to get us around town (and out of town too). So if you have ideas where GCN could be distributed and would like to help us accomplish that give Brian a call at 426-4469. It will be much appreciated. Thanks! (c)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

IWD Radio Event Looking for Tapes
Intert'l Women's Day Radio Event, Boston, 1986 wants tapes for 8th annual 24-hr. day of programming to air March 10 on WMBR, Cambridge. Will consider all audio tapes by, for, and about women. Send submissions on ¼-inch, ½-track, R/R tape at 7½ ips by Feb. 1, to Kate Rushin/Made Kaplan, 186 Hampshire St., Cambridge, MA. Include return postage. Sorry, can't accept cassettes.



TO ALL THOSE WHO IN AND OUT OF PRISON FIGHT AGAINST THEIR BONDAGE
(Alexander Berkman, Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist)



Thank you so very much for your paper. It has helped me with a lot of things. I'd like to ask for a penpal, in Texas or not. I'd just like a female gay penpal. One of my friends in here drew a picture which she is sending you for the paper. Debra DENVETT, 407421, Rt 4 Box 800, Gatesville TX 76528

I'm 23, half Puerto Rican and half Italian, and seeking friends (for starters). My hobbies are photography, swimming, handball, drawing and collecting stickers of unicorns and kittens. If interested in corresponding, please enclose stamp. Marie GONZALEZ, 160416-176, Box 8540, Pembroke Pines, FL 33024



"JUST US" is an inmate assistance program interested in the legal rights of prisoners and the status of prison reform all over the country. We provide research, reference, copywork and guidance to prisoners for post-conviction remedies, prisoners' rights or personal matters involving families or state agencies. Write: Just Us — C. Greene, 1001 Wilbur Ct No.8, Gretna LA 70056.



We have heard about an agency that provides information about jobs and other resources to people coming out of prison. Drop them a line and let us know how they work out for you. (Thanks): Contact Center Inc., Human Services Dept. PO Box 81826, Lincoln NE 68501. (402)464-0602.

Tall, ultra-feminine, pre-op transsexual presently on hormones desperately in need of correspondence from understanding males and females from all walks of life. Photo appreciated. Roberta BARRETT (Bunny), 76C 197, Box 149, Attica NY 14011.

Thanks for the paper. I love it! Since I'm in isolation (23 hrs a day in a cell alone), I'd really appreciate a penpal Greg JOHNSTONE, 82B629, Box 149, Attica NY 14011

Love to cook, dance, and read. Pick up a pen and drop a line to a down and out (and horny) guy. Not looking for money, stamps or whatever, just good conversation. Charles DePIERRO, 82A6068, Box 500, Elmira NY 14902

Please put a line somewhere in your next issue concerning my need for friendship. Eugene SHEPHERD, 151-512, Box 4571, Lima OH 45802.

Prisoners Seeking Friends

MIKE WANTS TO PUT TOGETHER SOMETHING ON PRISON AS "BIG BUSINESS" AND ON THE TREND TO HAVE PRISONS BE PRIVATELY RUN. IF YOU HAVE SOME IDEAS OR INFORMATION ON THESE, PLEASE WRITE: Mike/GCN, 167 Tremont, Boston MA 02111. Thanks!



GET WELL TOBY!

They were too afraid to attack you face to face. What cowards! Take good care.



30 yr old PWA seeking male or female friendship. Age and race not important. I enjoy reading, writing, cooking and anything people can do together to enjoy life. Gay life in the free world can be lonely, so think about what it can be here! I ask for nothing but a friend to be in touch with life. Edward BUBBENMAYER, M-7873, Camp Hill PA 17011.

Hi! I am the best cocksucker in North America. I'm also a horseman and need a job and a place to stay. I can give references from the stables I've worked for. My spirit is in tune with animals. Please write and tell me if you can use a good horseman. Robert Jude RYAN (my friends call me Jude), CN861-IEE, Trenton NY 08625.

I could write especially transsexuals and other gay people to help me understand myself better. I've never really been involved enough to just talk with other gays about life. I'd just like to talk with someone why has the same feelings I do. Terry Dean BOYD, Rt 1 Turney Ctr, Only TN 37140.

Lonely gay man in need of some intelligent conversation. Anyone who was writing me before my transfer please write again as I can't get ahold of my addresses because they've put me in isolation. Frank WADE, B-064304, Box 158 B/6-1, Lowell FL 32663.

Early 30s gay man in search of interracial, loving, relationship with feminine black male. Please write Gary Lee GANDEE, 243882, PO Box 520, Walla Walla WA 99362.

Lovely Black gay male would like to hear from sweet sexy boys and men. Marvin HARRIS, 184-576, PO Box 4571, Lima OH 45802.

Italian American single male desires to write anyone who wishes. Quality characteristics more important than age or race. Jeffery SHIEK, 158941, Box 69, London OH 43140

Gay Alaskan prisoner would like to hear from G/ or Queens and TSs for friendship. If you enjoy your true femininity, looking good, pleasing your man and being pleased, drop a line and some pics. Leslie MARTIN, 80385-001, Box 34550, Memphis TN 38184.

There must be some sweet thing out there someplace that wants a little older man that is not a Cassanova or into the bar scenes at all, but needs a strong relationship that is monogamous and strong for the two of them (us). Not into anything painful at all. I need a cuddler. Also a few brains and ability to take care of business would not hurt either. I am so stupid that I need a leash till I get housebroke (smile). LaVillie HANNON, 14594, Box 2 North A&T, Lansing KS 66043.



Here's another "coming out" resource group: ARS (Always Ready to Serve) Charities, 6730 N. 13th St., Philadelphia, PA 19126. (Let us know if they are useful).

A.A.

Alcoholics Anonymous has groups in 274 prisons, with over 45,000 members. If you want more info on starting on in your joint write: About AA, Box 459, Gr. Cent, NYC 10163



FREE to prisoners!
Telegnosis is a penpal and prison news rag for prisoners in the U.S. Drop them a line at Telegnosis, C.P.95 Stn. Place D'Armes, Montreal, P.Q. H2Y 3E9. (Postage is same as for U.S.)

CALENDAR

January 4 to January 22

4 saturday

Provincetown — *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, performed by the Provincetown Theatre Company. 460 Commercial St. 8PM. \$6/\$2.50 students & seniors. Info: 487-2695.

Bangor, ME — Bangor Interweave **Anniversary Dance**. Unitarian Church. Info: (207) 884-7683, or P.O. Box 8008, Bangor, ME 04401.

5 sunday

Dorchester — **GALA Holiday Potluck**. 4PM. Bring a dish or beverage to share. Info: 288-9155.

Concord, NH — **Citizens' Alliance** for Gay & Lesbian Rights meeting. Franklin Pierce Law Center, Washington & White Sts. 2PM. New people welcome. Info: (603) 228-9009.

6 monday

Cambridge — Boston **Bisexual Women's** Network. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7:30PM. Free. Open to women. Info: 354-8807.

7 tuesday

Cambridge — **Coming Out** Group. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7:30PM. Free. Open to women. Info: 354-8807.

Cambridge — **Former Nun** Lesbian Support Group. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7PM. Free. Open to women. Info: 354-8807.

Cambridge — **Fat women's** water exercise class. YWCA. 6:45-7:30PM. \$45 plus \$10 YWCA membership. Info: 491-6050.

Boston — *Straight Talk*, a TV documentary about Boston's gay/lesbian community. Channel 5. 8:30PM.

Boston — **GCN** potluck supper and membership meeting. Critique the paper and discuss the organization. All welcome. 167 Tremont St., near Park St. T stop. 6-9PM. Info: 426-4469.

8 wednesday

Cambridge — Open weekly discussion group for women — topic: **Women and AIDS**. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-10PM. (Next meeting, 1/15). Info: 354-8807.

Boston — **Tennessee Williams' Suddenly Last Summer**. The New Ehrlich Theater, 539 Tremont St. \$7-12. Through 2/8. Info: 482-6316.

9 thursday

Boston — **GCN's** production night: all welcome to proofread & paste-up pages. 5-7PM for proofreading, 8PM-midnight for paste-up. 167 Tremont St., near Park & Boylston T-stops. GCN: 426-4469.

Cambridge — **Lesbians Choosing Children** Network. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7:30PM. Free. Open to women. Info: 354-8807.

Boston — "Feminism in the 1920s," a lecture by Nancy F. Cott. Northeastern Univ., Frost Lounge, Eli Building. 8PM.

Boston — **Gay Boston**, a monthly television magazine. Entertainment Special. Cable Channel A3. 7PM.

10 friday

Boston — **GCN's** volunteer night: all welcome to help mail the paper to our subscribers. Refreshments, good times. Anytime after 6PM. 167 Tremont St., near Park & Boylston T-stops. GCN: 426-4469.

New Hampshire — Zealand Hut **Cross-Country Ski & Backpack** weekend with the Chiltern Mtn. Club. For intermediate skiers. Info: Linda, 734-4066 or Pat, 422-8302.

Cambridge — *Alsino and the Condor*, a film from **Nicaragua** presented by Artists Call. 7 Temple Place, Central Sq. 7:30PM & 9:30PM. \$4. Info: 492-2054.

Cambridge — **Amelia & Jennifer** perform. Modern Times Cafe, 134 Hampshire St. 8:45PM. Info: 354-8371.

Somerville — Somerville/Medford Gay & Lesbian Alliance **tupperware party**. Bill Casti's house. 7PM. Info: 623-3786.



"A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," Jan. 4

11 saturday

Cambridge — **Storytellers** in Concert present, "Beer Heads & Lobster Tales." First Church Congregational, 11 Garden St. 8PM. \$5/\$3.50 students & seniors. Info: 391-3744.

12 sunday

Boston — Newbury Street '86 benefit **fashion production**. Lafayette Hotel. 7PM. All proceeds go to AIDS Research Fund. Info: 266-6766.

Boston — "AIDS in the Community," a forum presented by the **Black Men's Association**. 558 Mass. Ave. 5PM. \$2. Info: 353-0719 or 262-5323.

Somerville — Somerville/Medford Gay & Lesbian Alliance **potluck supper**. Bill Casti's house. 5PM. Info: 623-3786.

Cambridge — "A Fag in the Hand and Other Monologues," **dramatic narratives** performed by Kate Alicechild. 186 Hampshire St. 4PM. \$2.

Cambridge — **Black and White Men Together**. Phillips Brooks House, Harvard Univ. 1-5PM.

13 monday

Cambridge — "Feminist Liberation Theology: Implications for Ministry," a four-day program. \$175 residential, \$95 non-residential. Info: EDS Continuing Education, 99 Brattle St., Cambridge 02138.

Somerville — Support group for **battered lesbians**. On-going, weekly, free. Childcare available. 6:15-7:30PM. Info: Respond, 623-5900.

Boston — **GCN** annual **Sustainers Dinner**. 167 Tremont St. 7PM. (To become a Sustainer, call Gordon at GCN.) Info: 426-4469.

14 tuesday

Boston — "AIDS III," a video documentary with Jim Carlton, produced by Hal Koltin. Cable Channel A3. 7:30PM. Info: 424-7292.

15 wednesday

Cambridge — **Lesbian Rights** Task Force of NOW meeting. 99 Bishop Allen Drive. 7PM. Info: 661-6015.

16 thursday

Dorchester — **GALA** monthly meeting. Codman Sq. Library, 690 Washington St. Info: 288-9155.

note this!

Straight Talk about Queers

Channel 5 has the best of intentions for its special on Boston's gay/lesbian community, called *Straight Talk*. The program is notable because it breaks the recent trend of reducing all articles and news stories about the gay and lesbian community to AIDS. *Straight Talk* is also notable because it includes portraits of lesbians and people of color. Its producer and executive producer are both Black, which helps explain the program's sensitivity on matters of race.

While it is clear that Channel 5 intended a positive, favorable portrait of Boston's gay/lesbian community, *Straight Talk* is not the definitive work we have all be waiting for. The program paints lesbian and gay life in Boston with a broad brush, perhaps all that is realistically possible in a 30-minute special.

The program devotes a large segment to religious issues. It includes a brief portrait/interview with journalist Christine Madsen, who was fired from her position as a reporter with the *Christian Science Monitor* because the paper's management discovered she was a lesbian. A second segment is devoted to Carlton Cornish, formerly a divinity student who gave up the Roman Catholic Church because of its homophobia, and there are two quick visits with Dignity and the Metropolitan Community Church.

The segment on gay health issues centers around Boston's Fenway Community Health Center. It mentions AIDS only briefly in the context of discussing the psychological anxiety AIDS has caused among gay men. It mentions the importance of sympathetic medical care to lesbians and gay men, but doesn't spend much time explaining how difficult it can be to obtain.

The program ends with three quick portraits which include a gay Asian artist and a Black lesbian writer. Each of the portraits seemed to be not much longer than a minute. They left me wanting more.

Conspicuously absent from the program are portraits of gay people in relationships or gay people raising children. The portraits of individuals always show them alone and the visual images do little to reveal their characters: Madsen is shown at home hanging out the laundry and briefly working on a loom; Cornish is shown entering an unidentified restaurant and walking alone on a deserted country road. Little or no attempt is made to connect these locations or activities with the characters of people involved. Only the artist and the writer are shown doing their work. The use of such unconnected images probably has more to do with tight production schedules and budgets than with any malicious intent on the part of the producers, who probably had to go with the pictures that were quick and easy to obtain.

Despite these serious shortcomings, Channel 5 should still be applauded for making *Straight Talk*. It will probably not bring the station much praise from straight viewers, and, as of this writing, advertisers have not been flocking to buy time during the broadcast. Rarely do we get as sympathetic or positive a program as *Straight Talk* from the straight media.

— Art Cohen

Submissions sought by **Deviance**. *Deviance*, a collection of prose and poetry dedicated to the female experience, will begin publication in the spring of 1986. *Deviance* will be a forum for saying "what must be said — by anyone." Write: *Deviance*, P.O. Box 1774, Pawtucket, RI 02862.

Calendar compiled by Miranda Kolbe

GAY COMMUNITY NEWS

***Gay Community News is
now in its thirteenth year of
publication. Have you sub-
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